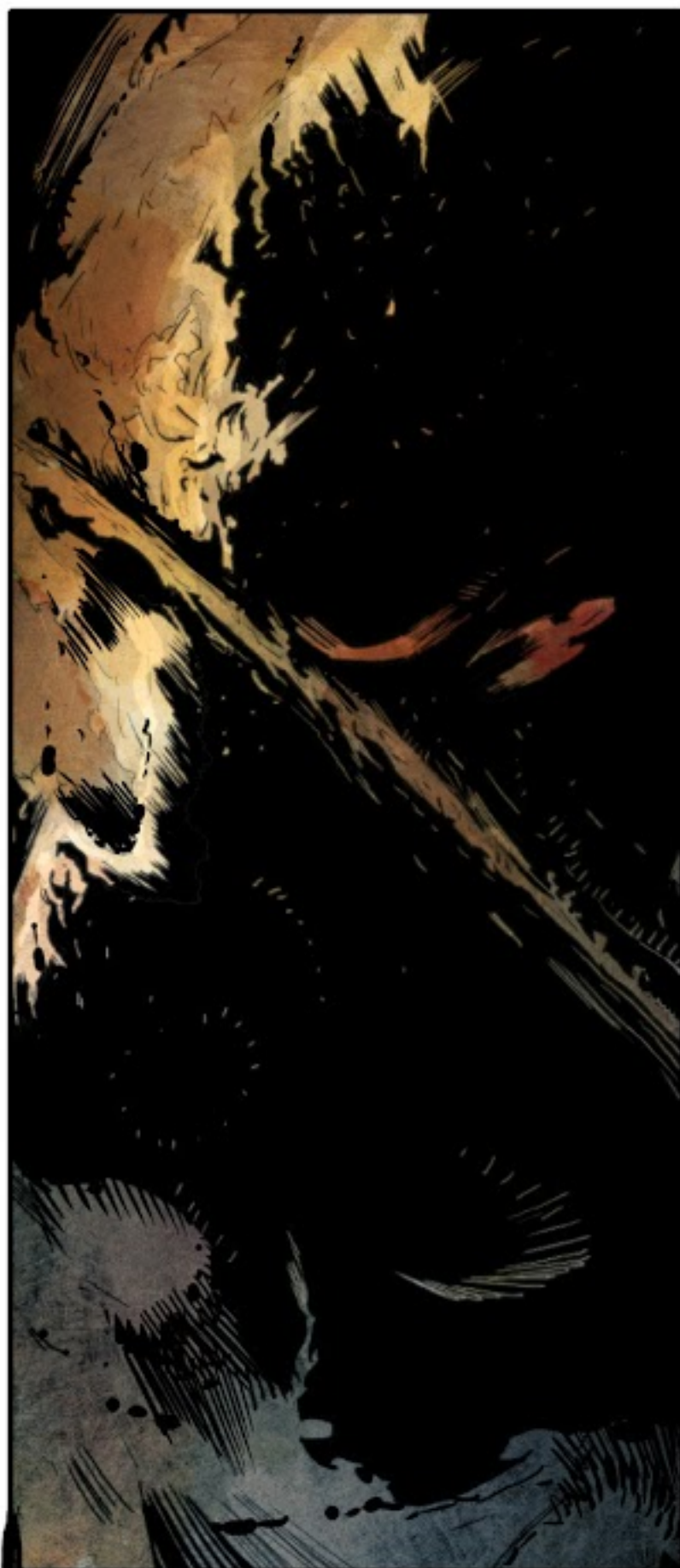


i
Image
DIGITAL
EDITION
ISSUE
250

SPAWN[®]



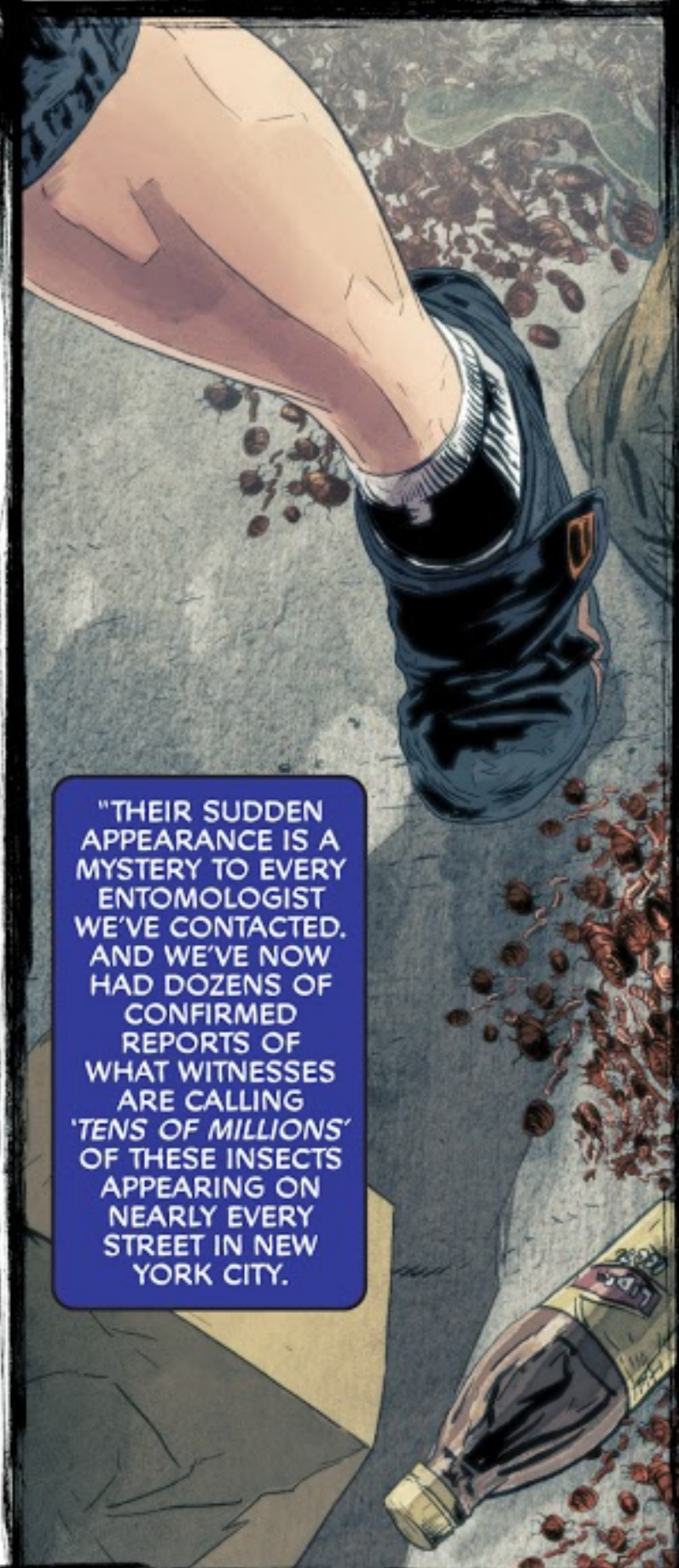
McFARLANE
collectibles



"THEY SEEM TO BE VIRTUALLY EVERYWHERE."



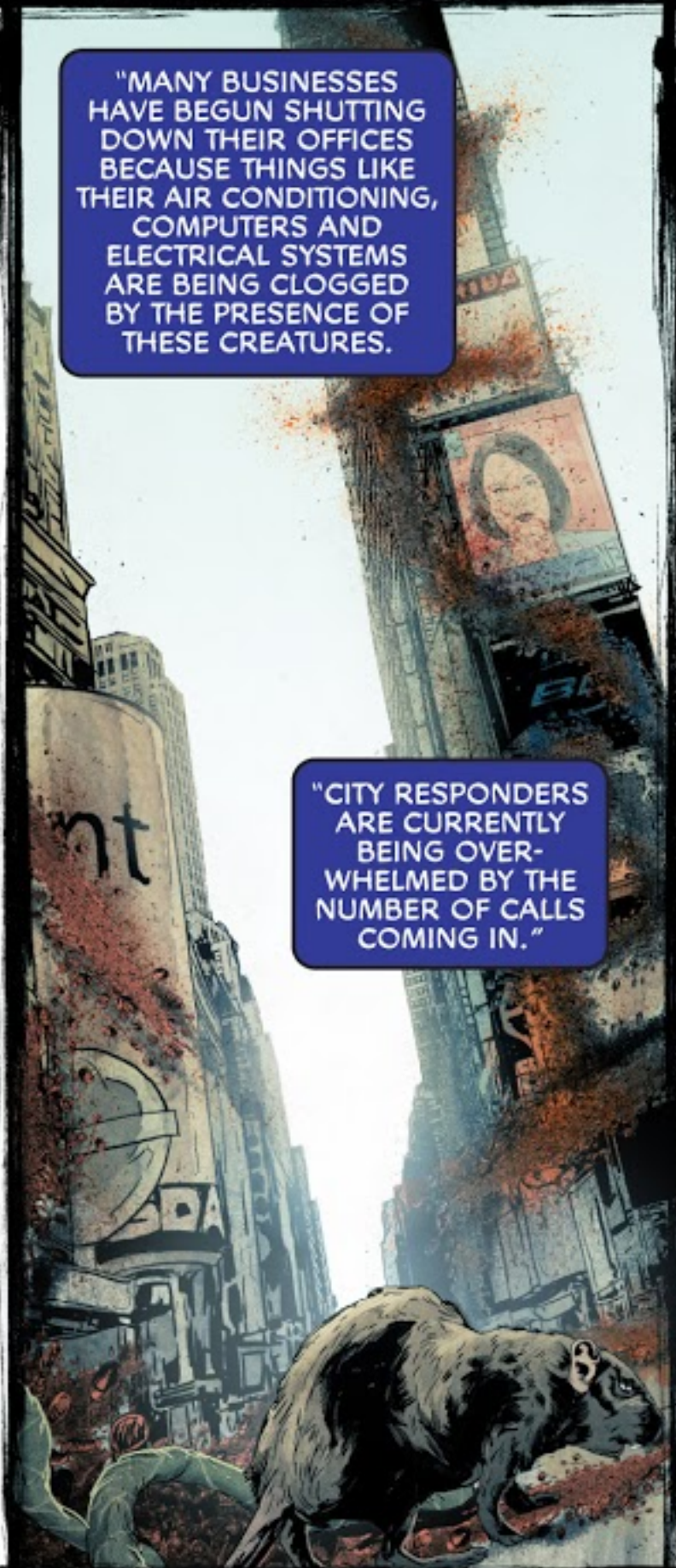
"AND SO FAR, NO ONE HAS BEEN ABLE TO GIVE ANY CREDIBLE ANSWERS TO THE SIMPLE QUESTION 'WHERE DID THEY ALL COME FROM?'"



"THEIR SUDDEN APPEARANCE IS A MYSTERY TO EVERY ENTOMOLOGIST WE'VE CONTACTED. AND WE'VE NOW HAD DOZENS OF CONFIRMED REPORTS OF WHAT WITNESSES ARE CALLING 'TENS OF MILLIONS' OF THESE INSECTS APPEARING ON NEARLY EVERY STREET IN NEW YORK CITY."



"A FEW FIRES HAVE BEEN SEEN AND THERE ARE REPORTS OF PANIC BREAKING OUT IN A FEW AREAS."



"MANY BUSINESSES HAVE BEGUN SHUTTING DOWN THEIR OFFICES BECAUSE THINGS LIKE THEIR AIR CONDITIONING, COMPUTERS AND ELECTRICAL SYSTEMS ARE BEING CLOGGED BY THE PRESENCE OF THESE CREATURES."

"CITY RESPONDERS ARE CURRENTLY BEING OVERWHELMED BY THE NUMBER OF CALLS COMING IN."

CITY POLICE HAVE ALREADY BEGUN ASSESSING HOW TO GET PEOPLE OUT OF THE CITY, BUT NEWS IS COMING IN THAT SOME INDIVIDUALS ARE HAVING A HARD TIME LEAVING. HEAVY DELAYS ARE EXPECTED ON ALL MAJOR THOROUGHFARES.

MAKING THINGS EVEN MORE DIFFICULT IS THAT MOST CELL PHONES IN THE CITY SEEM TO BE GETTING POOR RECEPTION DUE TO THE INTERFERENCE FROM WHAT SEEMS TO BE A HUGE, MOVING, BLACK CLOUD.

IN FACT, OUR OWN NEWS STATION IN NEW YORK HAS TEMPORARILY LOST ITS SIGNAL, WHICH IS WHY WE'VE HAD TO CUT AWAY FROM THEM. MEANWHILE, WE HERE IN THE ALBANY AREA WILL BRING YOU THE LATEST NEWS AND AS MUCH DETAIL AS WE CAN.

NYC BUG ATTACK **NEWS**

NYC BUG ATTACK **NEWS**

HOW DOES THIS CRAP EVEN GET TO THIS POINT???

DON'T TELL ME NO ONE AT CITY HALL SAW THE WARNING SIGNS THAT THIS KIND OF INFESTATION COULD TAKE PLACE!!

THEY HAVE WORKERS IN THE PARKS AND IN THE SEWERS **EVERY DAY!** A WAVE OF SPIDERS AND COCKROACHES THIS ENORMOUS, DOESN'T JUST GROW **OVERNIGHT!** AND JUST WHERE IN THE **HELL** DO THIS MANY SNAKES AND BATS COME FROM!? I GET **RATS!** THEY'VE PLAGUED THIS CITY FOR **DECADES**. BUT NOT WHAT WE'RE SEEING **NOW!**

I'VE TOLD YOU ABOUT THE UPCOMING **APOCALYPSE** TIME AND TIME **AGAIN!** WELL, THIS IS WHAT ALL THOSE DAMN **LIBERALS** HAVE BROUGHT UPON YOUR HEADS!!

NY'S PEST PROBLEM

ANOTHER STRANGE PART OF ALL THIS, IS THE SIGHTING AROUND TOWN OF WHAT APPEARS TO BE THE BUGS FORMING **SYMBOLS** OF SOME SORT WHEREVER THEY'RE CRAWLING. SOME ARE CALLING THEM NUMBERS OR LETTERS OR PERHAPS JUST **SHAPES**, BUT IN ALL INSTANCES, THEY SEEM TO BE MAKING THE SAME THREE KINDS OF MARKINGS.

THIS HAS LED TO FEARS FROM THOSE LIVING IN THE CITY, NOT ONLY BECAUSE THEY'RE SCARED BY SO MANY INSECTS AROUND THEM, BUT BECAUSE IT'S EVEN MORE UNSETTLING THAT THE BUGS SEEM TO HAVE SOME TYPE OF PURPOSE, OR **SEMI-INTELLIGENCE**, TO THEIR ACTIONS.

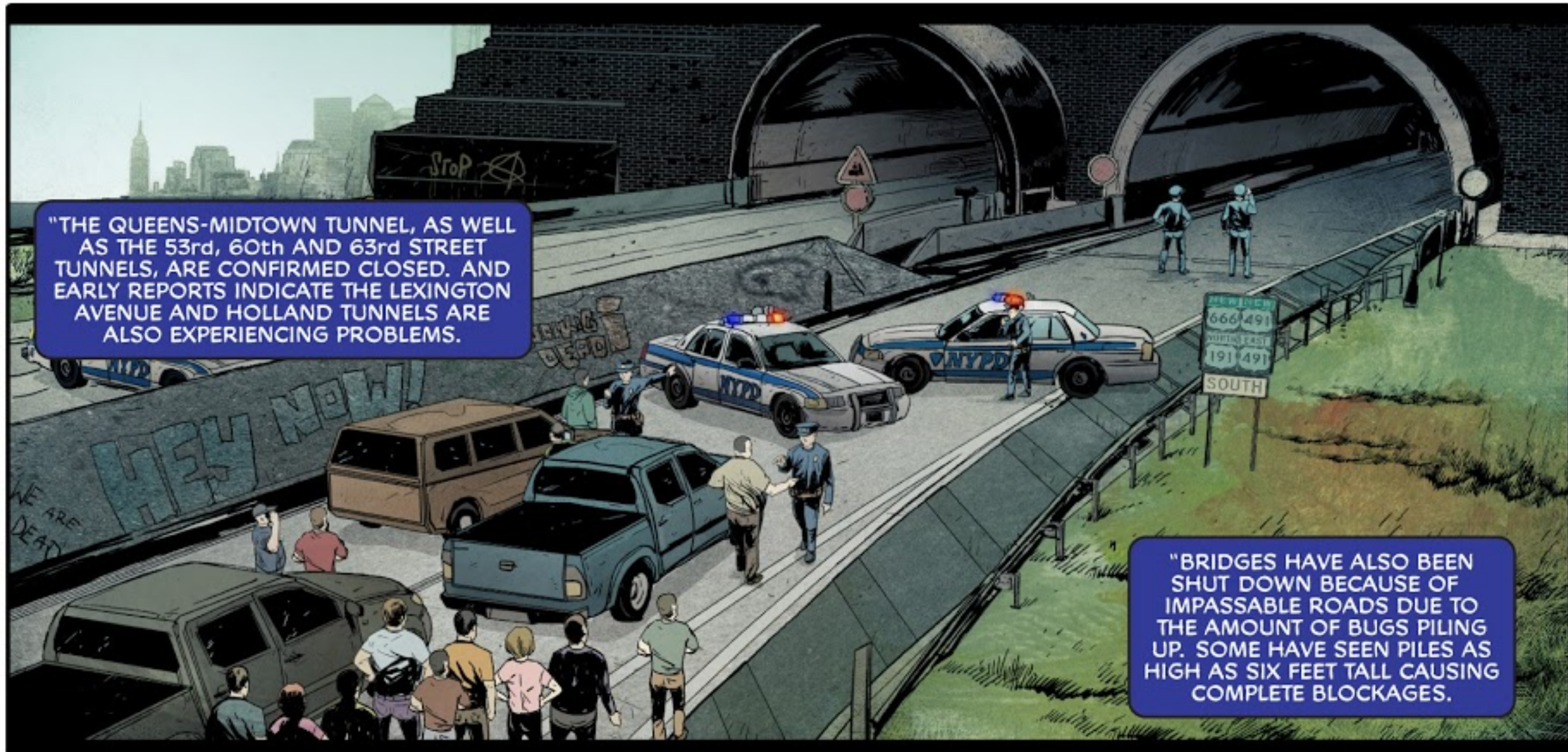
RAMPAGING RODENTS





"STATE OFFICIALS HAVE SAID THEY'VE ALREADY CALLED IN OUTSIDE REINFORCEMENTS AND EXPECT THEM TO ARRIVE SHORTLY.

"IN THE MEANTIME, SOURCES ARE TELLING US THAT DOZENS OF ROAD CLOSURES HAVE ALREADY BEGUN, CAUSING HUGE TRAFFIC JAMS FOR THOSE WANTING TO GET IN OR OUT OF THE CITY.



"THE QUEENS-MIDTOWN TUNNEL, AS WELL AS THE 53rd, 60th AND 63rd STREET TUNNELS, ARE CONFIRMED CLOSED. AND EARLY REPORTS INDICATE THE LEXINGTON AVENUE AND HOLLAND TUNNELS ARE ALSO EXPERIENCING PROBLEMS.

"BRIDGES HAVE ALSO BEEN SHUT DOWN BECAUSE OF IMPASSABLE ROADS DUE TO THE AMOUNT OF BUGS PILING UP. SOME HAVE SEEN PILES AS HIGH AS SIX FEET TALL CAUSING COMPLETE BLOCKAGES.



"THE FIRE DEPARTMENT HAS ATTEMPTED TO CLEAR PATHS, BUT AS SOON AS THEY MOVE THE CREATURES, MORE SEEM TO FILL THE EMPTY SPACE. AS ONE FIRE FIGHTER SAID 'IT'S LIKE TRYING TO SHOVEL WATER WITH A FORK.'"

"THE KENNEDY AND UNION STREET BRIDGES, AS WELL AS A DOZEN OTHERS, HAVE FALLEN VICTIM TO THESE CLOSURES. WE'LL CONTINUE TO UPDATE THE STATUS OF ALL THESE OUTLETS AS WE RECEIVE THEM."



"FOR NOW, POLICE ARE REROUTING TRAFFIC AS BEST AS THEY CAN. SO PATIENCE IS BEING REQUESTED FROM OFFICIALS."

ANY IDEA HOW LONG BEFORE WE GET MOVING AGAIN?

NOT RIGHT NOW.



WALK... DON'T RUN TO THE NEAREST EXITS.

BUT IF IT MAKES YOU FEEL ANY BETTER, I HEAR PEOPLE IN THE SUBWAYS ARE COMPLETELY SCREWED TOO.



HEARD ON THE RADIO SOMETHING ABOUT AIR SUPPORT. WHAT'S THAT ABOUT?

COULDN'T SAY.

ISN'T THAT ODD? SENDING IN JETS INSTEAD OF TRUCKS?

I'M SURE THEY HAVE THEIR REASONS. MAYBE THEY WANT TO...

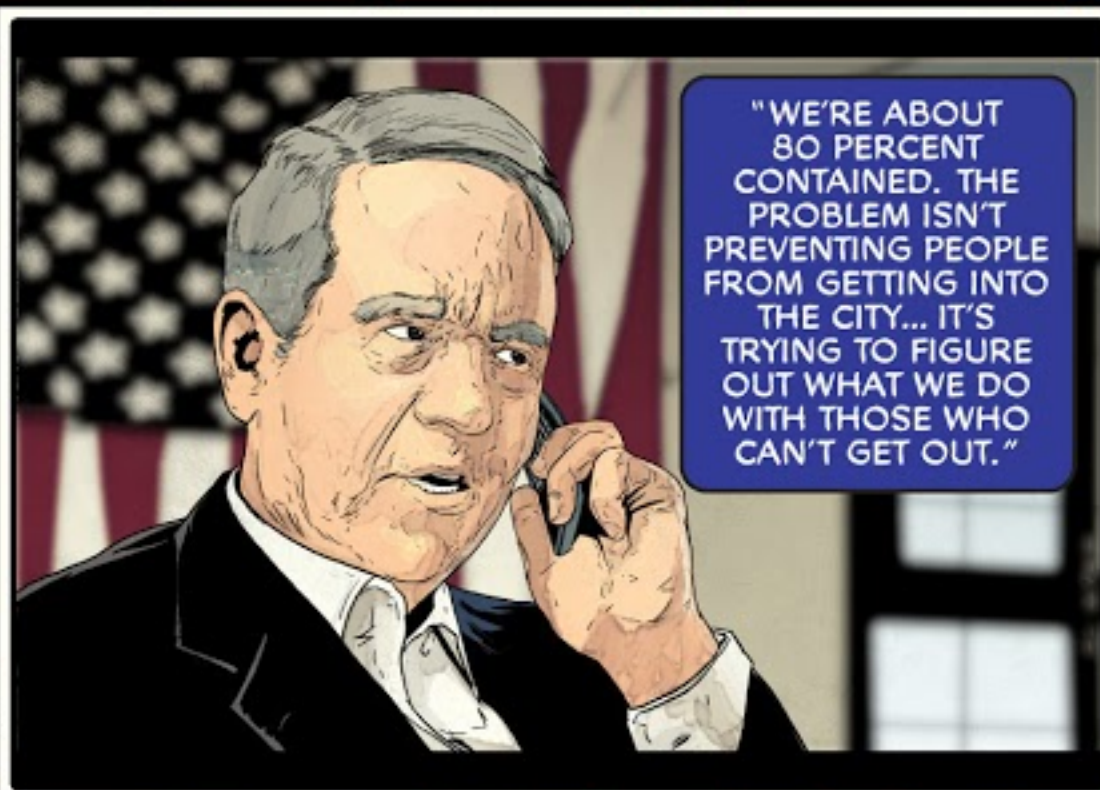
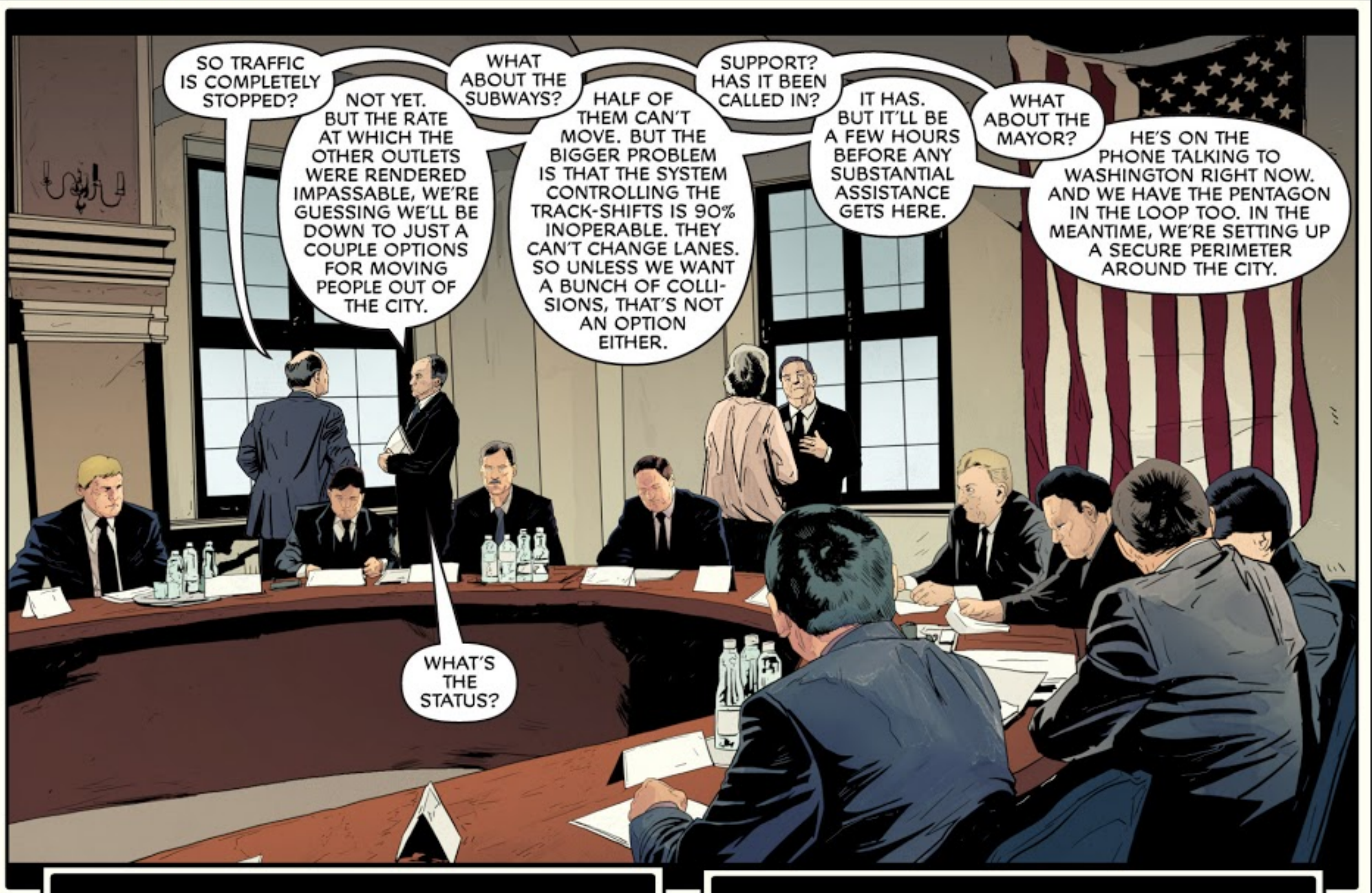


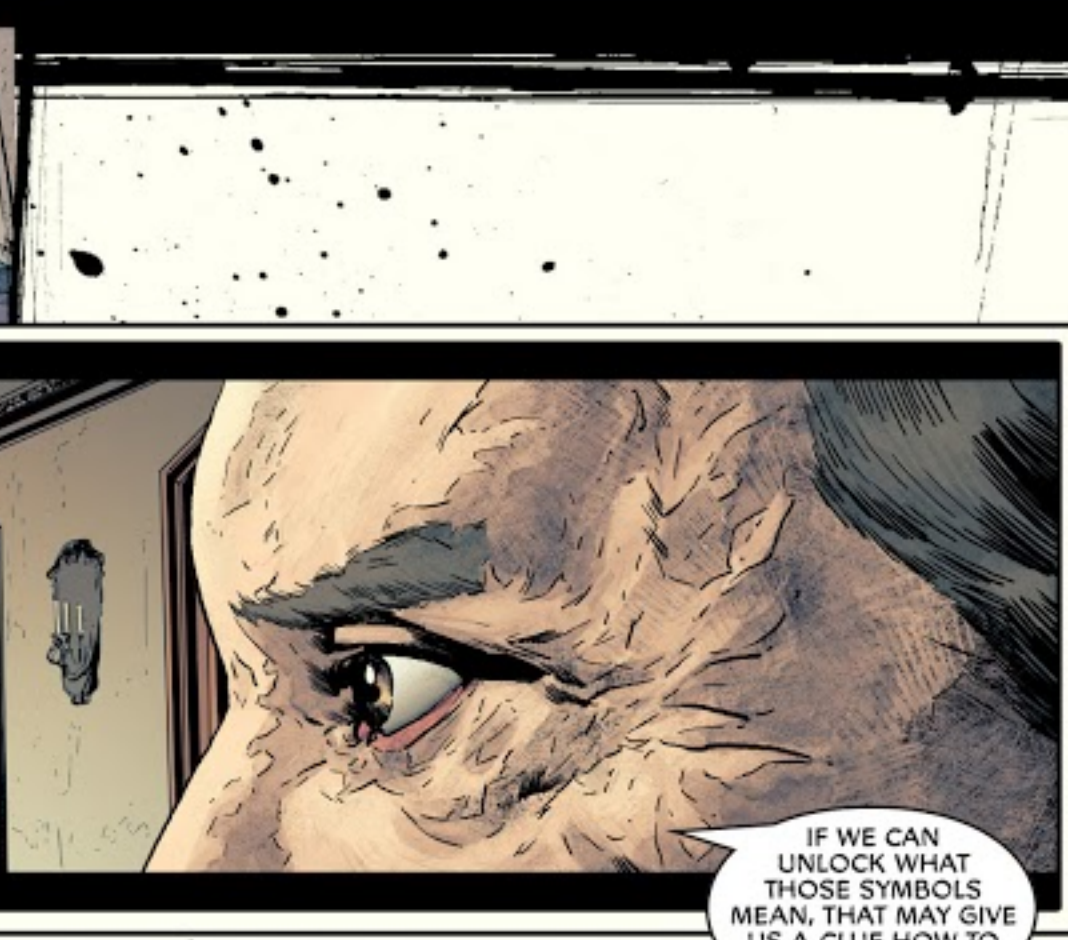
holy

shit!









"AND THEY'RE MAKING THEM IN ANY SIZE, IN ANY PLACE."

IF WE CAN UNLOCK WHAT THOSE SYMBOLS MEAN, THAT MAY GIVE US A CLUE HOW TO DEFEAT THEM.



Minutes Later.





THOSE GIANT SYMBOLS, THE BUGS ARE MAKING EVERYWHERE... THEY'RE NUMBERS.

THAT'S WHAT YOU AND COG KEEP SAYING. BUT I DON'T SEE HOW. ONE OF THEM LOOKS LIKE A 'V.'

IT IS A 'V,' BUT NOT THE LETTER. IT'S THE ROMAN NUMERAL FIVE, WHICH ALSO LOOKS LIKE A 'V.' AND IF THAT'S TRUE THEN THE THREE NUMBERS THEY'RE SCRAWLING ALL OVER ARE...

ONE. FIVE. AND SEVEN. OKAY, SO WHAT?

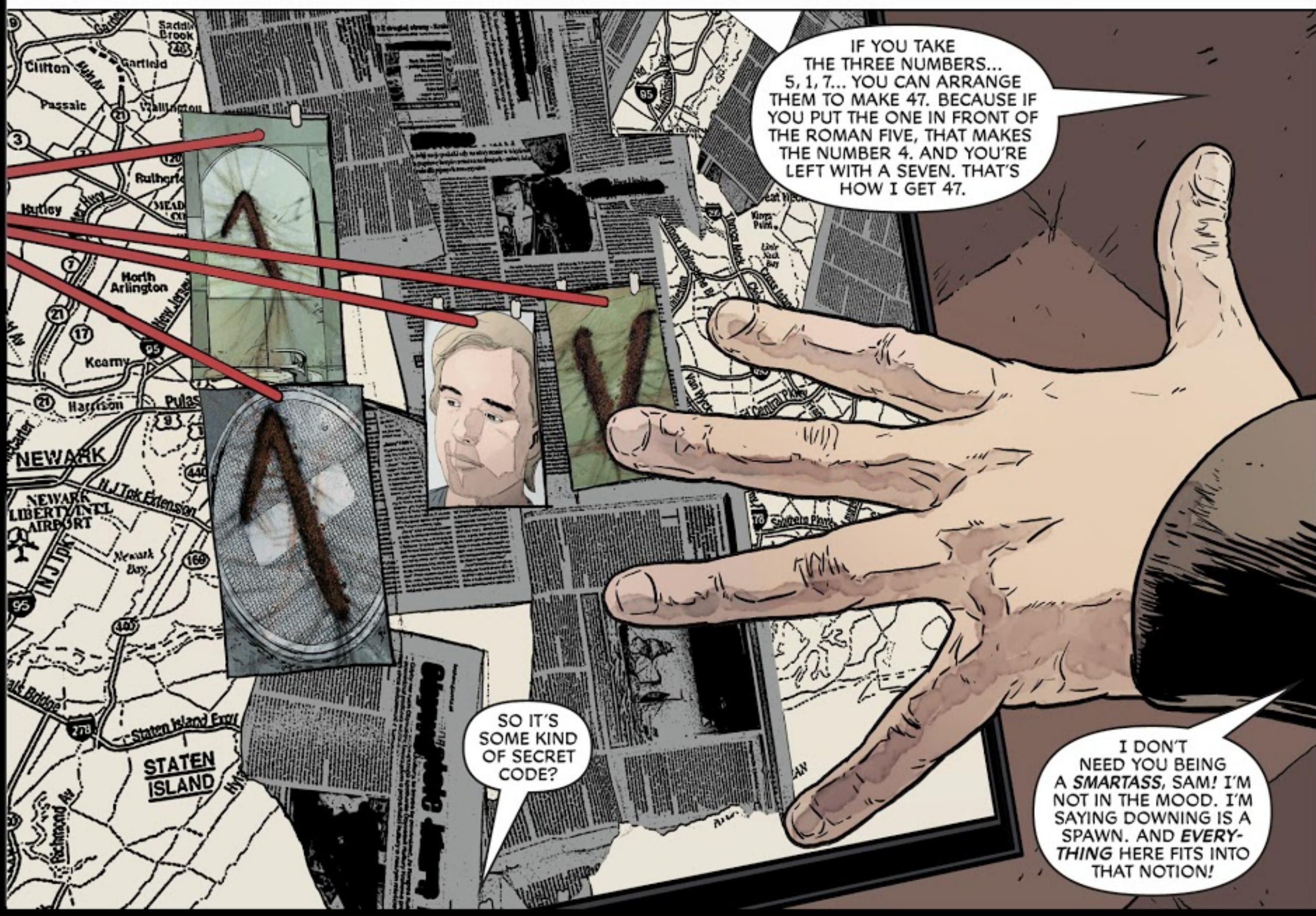
THOSE THREE NUMBERS ARE INEXPLICABLY LINKED TO JIM DOWNING. REMEMBER HOW I TOLD YOU THAT I SPENT TIME WITH DOWNING WHILE YOU WERE IN THE HOSPITAL? WHEN I WAS WITH HIM, HE TOLD ME SOME THINGS. SOME THINGS ABOUT HIS PAST.

I THOUGHT HE DIDN'T HAVE A PAST.

HE DOESN'T. BUT HE HAS PIECES OF IT. AND THE BIGGEST PIECE WAS HIM BEING CALLED "PATIENT 47."

I'M NOT FOLLOWING.

*Beginning in Issue 199--Todd



IF YOU TAKE THE THREE NUMBERS... 5, 1, 7... YOU CAN ARRANGE THEM TO MAKE 47. BECAUSE IF YOU PUT THE ONE IN FRONT OF THE ROMAN FIVE, THAT MAKES THE NUMBER 4. AND YOU'RE LEFT WITH A SEVEN. THAT'S HOW I GET 47.

SO IT'S SOME KIND OF SECRET CODE?

I DON'T NEED YOU BEING A SMARTASS, SAM! I'M NOT IN THE MOOD. I'M SAYING DOWNING IS A SPAWN. AND EVERYTHING HERE FITS INTO THAT NOTION!



LIKE WHAT?

I DID SOME DIGGING AND I KEEP COMING BACK TO THESE SAME NUMBERS.

DOWNING CAME OUT OF HIS COMA AT 1:57 A.M., AND THE DATE WAS JULY 15th OF LAST YEAR. JULY IS THE SEVENTH MONTH. THE FIFTEENTH DAY OF THE SEVENTH MONTH. I ALSO LOOKED IT UP-- REMEMBER THAT HUGE GREEN LIGHT THAT MYSTERIOUSLY STRUCK THE CITY AWHILE BACK?*

A FRIEND OF MINE, WHO WORKS IN WASHINGTON, MADE A FEW CALLS AND HE SAID THE GOVERNMENT METEOROLOGISTS LOGGED IT IN AS HAPPENING THE SAME DAY THAT DOWNING CAME OUT OF HIS COMA... AT THE SAME TIME... 1:57 A.M.

AND IF YOU LOOK AT THE REST OF WHAT I BROUGHT, YOU'LL SEE THE SAME TYPE OF PATTERNS. HELL, EVEN THE ORIGINAL SPAWN, AL SIMMONS, SOMEHOW TIES INTO THIS. HE DIED IN THE LINE OF DUTY, WORKING FOR A SECRET SECURITY DEPARTMENT. GUESS WHAT DEPARTMENT NUMBER HE WORKED IN?

FIVE SEVENTY-ONE.

SO HOW DOES IT HELP US? THE CHIEF ISN'T GOING TO CALL THE MAYOR AND TELL HIM TO START CHASING DOWN THE TOWN'S LOCAL CELEBRITY.

I'M WAITING ON ONE LAST BATCH OF FILES FROM DOWNING'S FINGERPRINTS. I'M HOPING IT SOLIDIFIES MY THEORIES.



UNLIKE MANY OF OUR RIVAL NEWS OUTLETS, WE'VE BEEN ABLE TO STAY ON THE AIR. MANAGEMENT IS CONCERNED THAT WE AREN'T SURE HOW MUCH LONGER WE'LL BE ABLE TO CONTINUE, BUT WE'LL BRING YOU AS MUCH DETAIL AS WE CAN FOR AS LONG AS POSSIBLE. IF WE DO LOSE OUR CONNECTION, OUR AFFILIATE IN PHILADELPHIA WILL TAKE OVER OUR BROADCAST. IN THE MEANTIME, HERE'S WHAT HAS BEEN CONFIRMED...

LOCAL OFFICIALS SAY THEY'VE SPOKEN TO BOTH THE WHITE HOUSE AND PENTAGON ABOUT WHAT'S FAST BECOMING A STATE OF EMERGENCY. THE PACE OF CRISIS SITUATIONS FAR OUTWEIGHS WHAT CAN BE ADDRESSED. SCHOOL CHILDREN ARE UNABLE TO GET HOME TO THEIR PARENTS. NEARLY ALL TAXIS AND CARS ARE GRIDLOCKED IN THE STREETS, RENDERING MOST EMERGENCY VEHICLES USELESS. POLICE AND FIREFIGHTERS ARE LEFT WAITING ON THE SIDELINES.

"MOST PEOPLE HAVE ABANDONED THEIR CARS AND ARE TRAVELING ON FOOT IN ANY DIRECTION THEY CAN, BRINGING BACK MEMORIES OF THE SHEER HORROR OF THE 9/11 ATTACKS. ONLY THIS TIME, INSTEAD OF SMOKE AND DEBRIS, THE ATTACK IS ONE OF BUGS, INSECTS AND CRAWLERS, SO THICK THAT ALMOST EVERY MODE OF TRANSPORTATION HAS BEEN IMMOBILIZED."

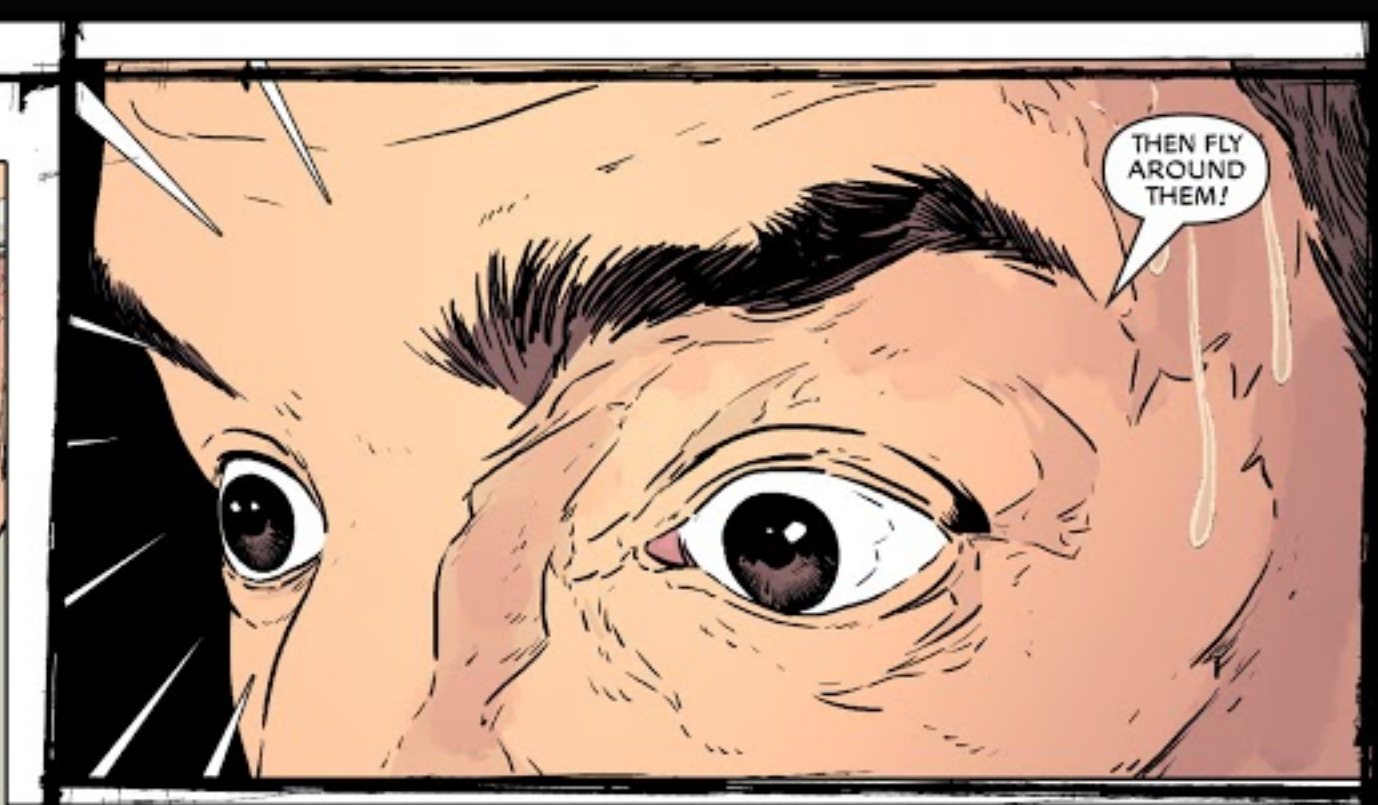


"ALL THE INFORMATION WE CAN GET SUGGESTS THAT THE SITUATION IS ONLY GROWING WORSE."



"ANY BREACHES IN THE BARRAGE ARE QUICKLY SEALED BY MORE CREATURES. EVEN THE SKIES ABOVE AREN'T SAFE FROM THIS HISTORIC CATASTROPHE THAT'S BEFALLEN OUR GREAT CITY. ONLY GOD KNOWS WHEN IT'LL END."







I UNDERSTAND, SUSAN. THINGS ARE MESSED UP, BUT I NEED YOU TO CALM DOWN. CAN YOU DO THAT FOR ME?

GOOD!

RIGHT NOW, THE MEDIA ISN'T GOING TO GIVE A CRAP ABOUT JIM OR SARA. THEY'VE GOT THIS 'CITY INVASION' STORY RUNNING EVERYWHERE. SO DON'T WORRY ABOUT THEM, THEY DON'T MATTER. YOU DO. I WANT YOU SAFE. GET BACK TO OUR APARTMENT. CAN YOU DO THAT?

WHERE ARE YOU AT ANYWAY? ARE THEY LETTING PEOPLE THROUGH ON THOSE STREETS?

THEN FIND ANOTHER WAY! IF YOU HAVE ANY MORE TROUBLES, CALL ME.

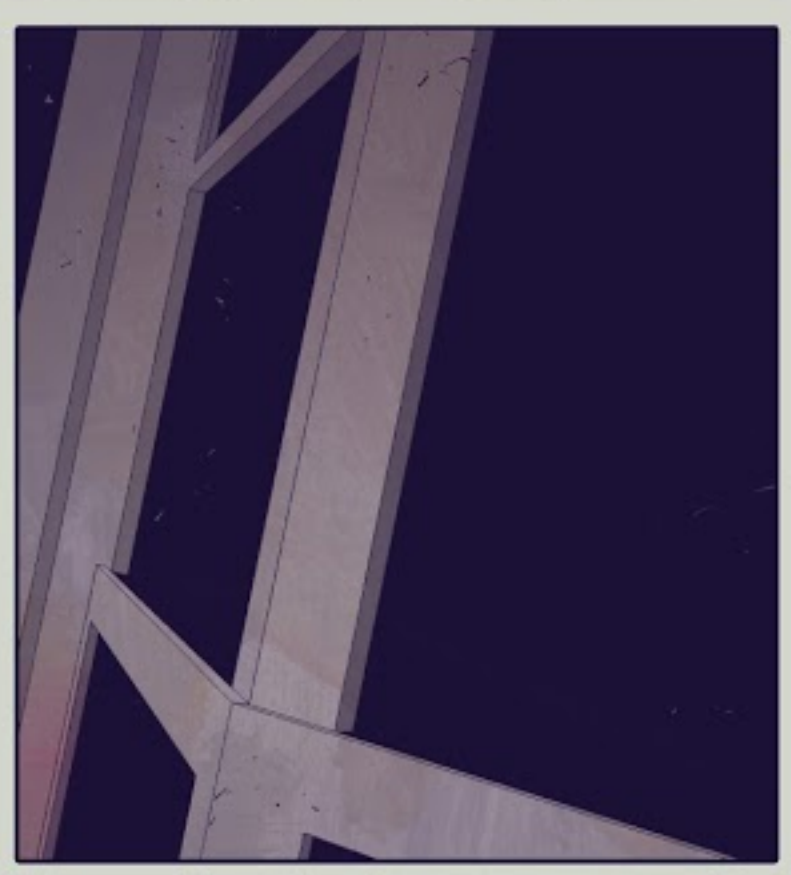
WHAT AM I DOING? I'M TRYING TO SORT THINGS OUT OVER HERE. EVERYONE'S FREAKING OUT. BETWEEN THE BUGS AND SARA'S CONDITION, THEY'RE ALL IN A PANIC. I WISH FOR ONCE SOMEONE ELSE WOULD STEP UP AND TAKE CONTROL.



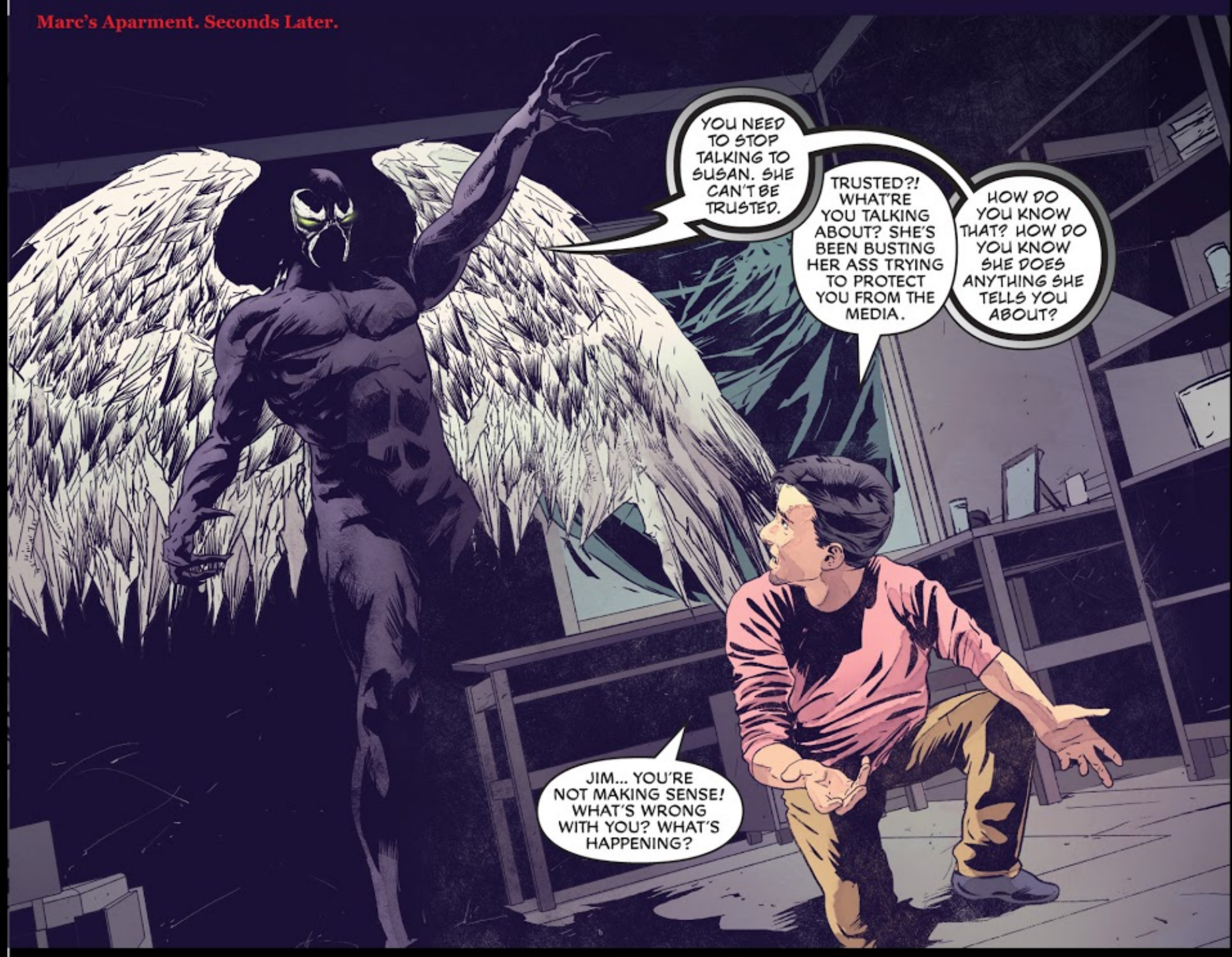
IT'S EXHAUSTING, ALWAYS...



uh?



Marc's Apartment. Seconds Later.



YOU NEED TO STOP TALKING TO SUSAN. SHE CAN'T BE TRUSTED.

TRUSTED?! WHAT'RE YOU TALKING ABOUT? SHE'S BEEN BUSTING HER ASS TRYING TO PROTECT YOU FROM THE MEDIA.

HOW DO YOU KNOW THAT? HOW DO YOU KNOW SHE DOES ANYTHING SHE TELLS YOU ABOUT?

JIM... YOU'RE NOT MAKING SENSE! WHAT'S WRONG WITH YOU? WHAT'S HAPPENING?



WHAT'S HAPPENING IS THIS CITY IS ABOUT TO EXPLODE-- BECAUSE OF ME!

YOU MEAN THE BUGS?

I MEAN ALL OF IT! **EVERYTHING!** AND MY ENEMIES ARE EVERYWHERE!

INCLUDING SUSAN?

INCLUDING SUSAN.

AND YOU'RE NOT BEING REALISTIC. LOOK AROUND! WHAT DO YOU SEE? YOU THINK THIS CITY, FILLED WITH A BILLION CREATURES AND ME WITH ANGEL WINGS, IS **NORMAL???** EVERYTHING'S GONE CRAZY! THE FASTER YOU ACCEPT THAT, THE BETTER.

YOU'RE CRAZY.

I'M FIGHTING MY COSTUME RIGHT NOW... WITH EVERY FIBER OF MY BEING! I DON'T KNOW HOW MUCH LONGER I CAN HOLD IT BACK. AND THOSE BUGS-- THEY'RE HERE TO ATTACK ME! THEY DON'T CARE ABOUT THIS CITY OR ANYONE LIVING IN IT AS LONG AS THEY GET TO ME.

AND YOU WANT ME TO STOP THEM?

NO! I WANT YOU TO HELP ME! STARTING BY GETTING TO THE HOSPITAL AND MAKING SURE SARA IS SAFE BECAUSE THEY WANT HER TOO. THEY KNOW SHE'S IMPORTANT TO ME AND THEY'LL STOP AT NOTHING TO DEFEAT ME.

WHO'S THEY?

HELL! AND EVERYTHING THAT LIVES IN IT! THEY'RE MAKING ONE LAST EFFORT TO CONTROL ME! THE ONLY THING ON MY SIDE NOW IS TIME. SO I NEED TO DELAY THEM.



LOOK, JIM, THIS IS WAY OUT OF MY LEAGUE! I CAN'T HELP YOU. WHY DON'T YOU JUST GO GET SARA YOURSELF? BRING HER HERE LIKE YOU JUST DID WITH ME?

IT'S TOO DANGEROUS! I CAN BARELY MAINTAIN WHAT'S HAPPENING TO ME NOW. BESIDES, THAT'S EXACTLY WHAT THEY WANT ME TO DO. THEY WANT ME NEAR SARA, SO THEY CAN KILL HER... I WON'T LET THAT HAPPEN.





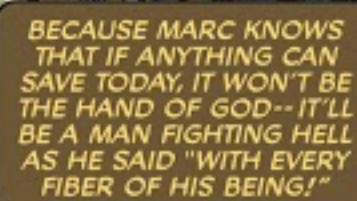
MARC ATTEMPTS TO SHOUT OUT TO DOWNING-- BUT HE STOPS HIMSELF. HE REALIZES THERE'S NOTHING HE CAN SAY THAT WOULD BE HELPFUL TO ANYONE. WHAT'S HAPPENING BELOW TO HIS FRIEND AND TO HIS CITY, CAN'T BE REMEDIED BY A FEW ENCOURAGING COMMENTS.

SO HE STANDS SILENT, STUNNED BY THE GAPING HOLE THAT A FEW MOMENTS AGO WAS A WALL. AND ALL HE CAN DO IS WATCH SPAWN DISAPPEAR INTO THE HORIZON, LIKE SOMETHING SHOT FROM A CANNON.

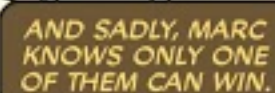
BUT FOR A BRIEF SECOND HE SAW! MARC SAW THE COSTUME RISE AND SWALLOW HIS FRIEND. THAT'S WHAT JIM WAS TALKING ABOUT. THAT'S WHAT JIM SAID... HE WAS TRYING TO FIGHT BACK!



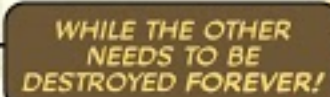
MARC WHISPERS A QUICK PRAYER. HE KNOWS IT'S AN ACT OF DESPERATION... BUT IT'S ALL HE HAS LEFT.



BECAUSE MARC KNOWS THAT IF ANYTHING CAN SAVE TODAY, IT WON'T BE THE HAND OF GOD-- IT'LL BE A MAN FIGHTING HELL AS HE SAID "WITH EVERY FIBER OF HIS BEING!"

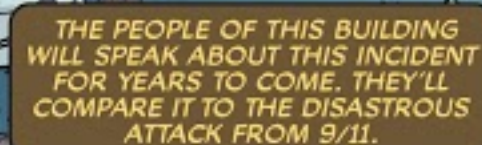


AND SADLY, MARC KNOWS ONLY ONE OF THEM CAN WIN.

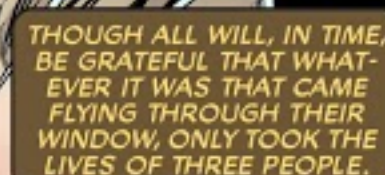


WHILE THE OTHER NEEDS TO BE DESTROYED FOREVER!

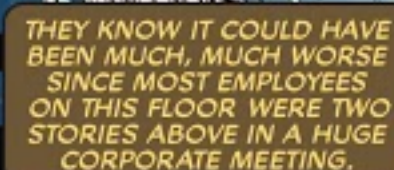
KISSSH!



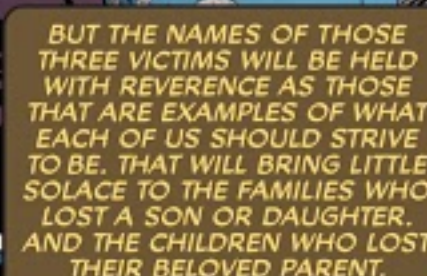
THE PEOPLE OF THIS BUILDING WILL SPEAK ABOUT THIS INCIDENT FOR YEARS TO COME. THEY'LL COMPARE IT TO THE DISASTROUS ATTACK FROM 9/11.



THOUGH ALL WILL, IN TIME, BE GRATEFUL THAT WHATEVER IT WAS THAT CAME FLYING THROUGH THEIR WINDOW, ONLY TOOK THE LIVES OF THREE PEOPLE.



THEY KNOW IT COULD HAVE BEEN MUCH, MUCH WORSE SINCE MOST EMPLOYEES ON THIS FLOOR WERE TWO STORIES ABOVE IN A HUGE CORPORATE MEETING.



BUT THE NAMES OF THOSE THREE VICTIMS WILL BE HELD WITH REVERENCE AS THOSE THAT ARE EXAMPLES OF WHAT EACH OF US SHOULD STRIVE TO BE. THAT WILL BRING LITTLE SOLACE TO THE FAMILIES WHO LOST A SON OR DAUGHTER, AND THE CHILDREN WHO LOST THEIR BELOVED PARENT.

KAASH!



WHAT'S THIS ABOUT? WHY'D YOU DRAG ME DOWN HERE?

I NEED TO KNOW WHAT'S HAPPENING TO THIS CITY.

I HAVEN'T SEEN JIM MUCH... AND TO TELL YOU THE TRUTH, I'M NOT EXACTLY HIS FAVORITE PERSON RIGHT NOW.



BUT YOU'VE BEEN DRAINING HIS POWERS-- EVERY TIME YOU TOUCH HIM.

YOU SHOULD 'FEEL' SOMETHING!



I DO. EVEN INSIDE THIS HUMAN HOST. BUT IT DOESN'T MAKE MUCH SENSE. WHEN I CLOSE MY EYES, THERE'S GREEN AND BLACK. A WHOLE LOT OF BLACK! I DON'T KNOW WHAT IT MEANS.



IT MEANS WHAT'S HAPPENING ISN'T JUST BECAUSE OF DOWNING.

HOW DO YOU KNOW THAT?!

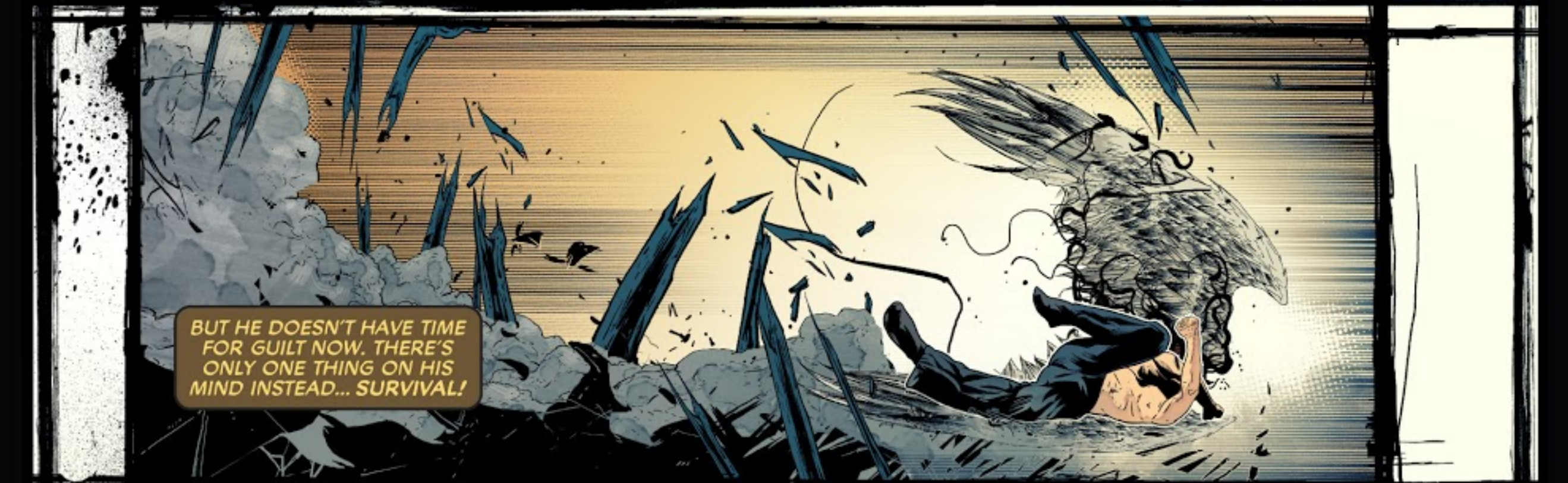
BECAUSE THE COLORS DON'T LIE. IF THERE'S AS MUCH BLACK AS YOU SAY... THERE'S SOMETHING ELSE. AND THAT SOMETHING IS WHY THE BUGS ARE HERE. THEY REPRESENT *EVIL*. AND *POWER*. AND THE MORE OF THEM, THE BIGGER THE EVIL THAT'S COMING.

OR ITS' POWER, RIGHT?

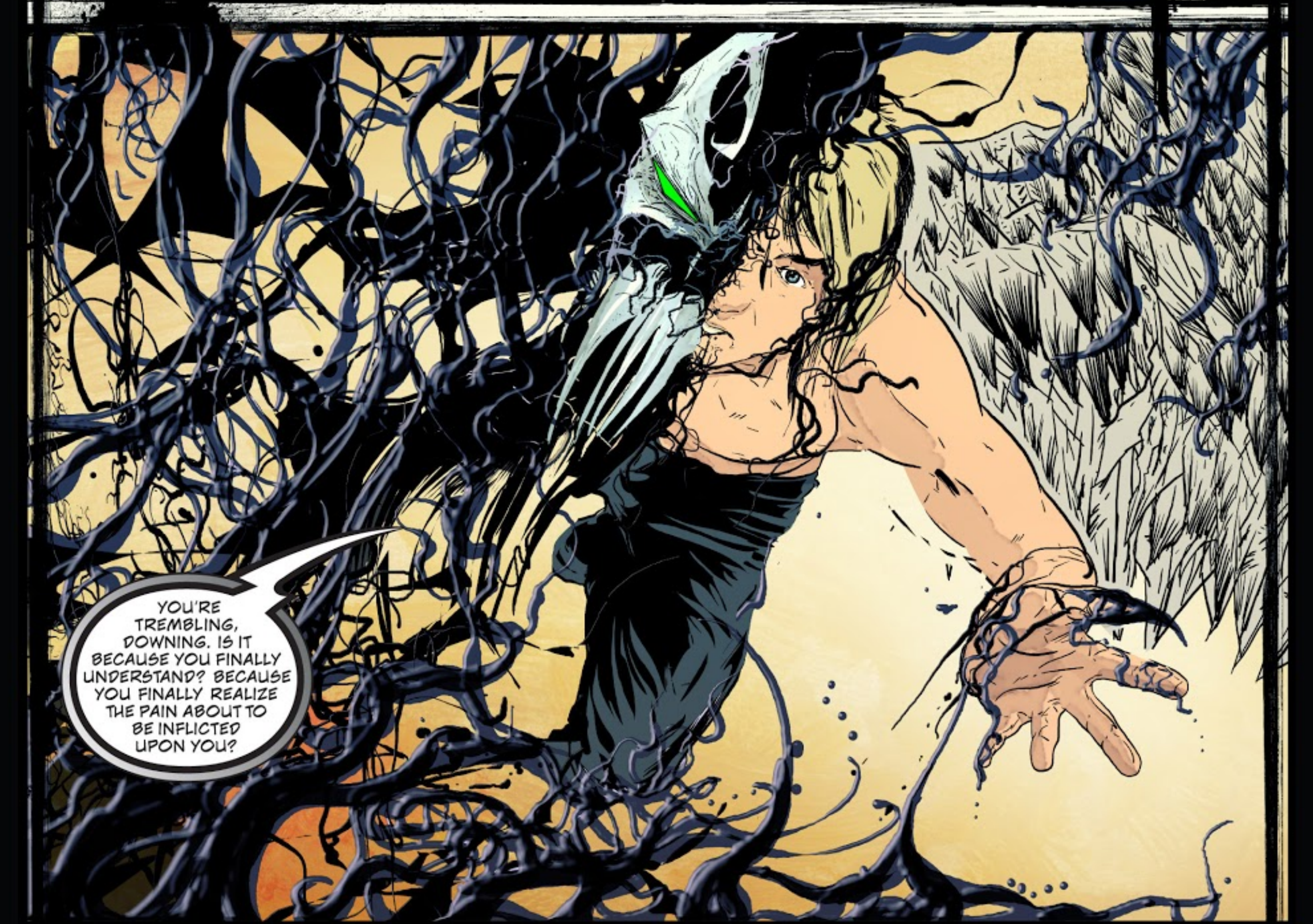
OR BOTH.



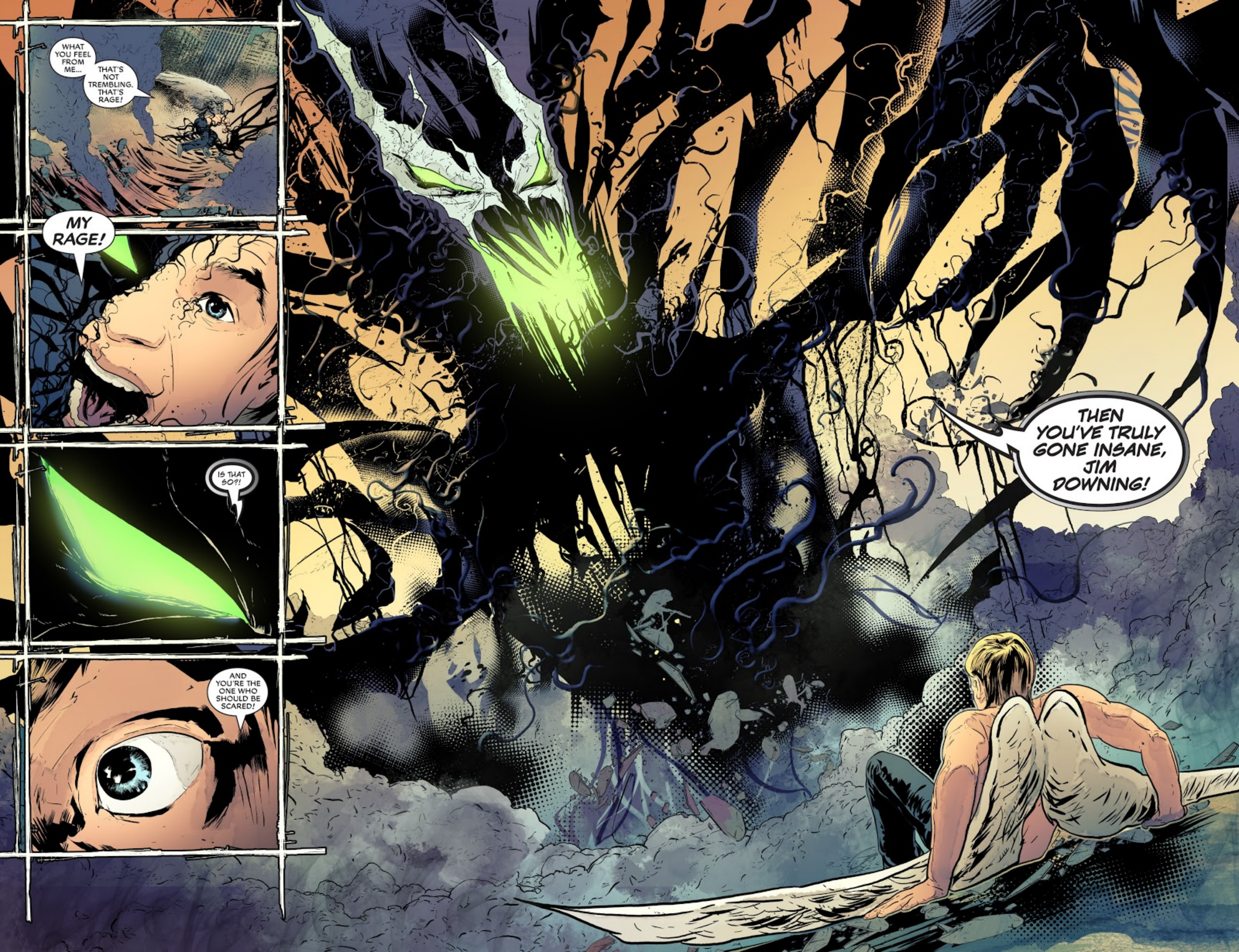
FOR HIS PART, JIM DOWNING, WILL NEVER FORGIVE HIMSELF FOR WHAT JUST HAPPENED. THE IMAGES OF THAT CHAOS AND SLAUGHTER WILL HAUNT HIM FOR THE REST OF HIS NATURAL LIFE.



BUT HE DOESN'T HAVE TIME FOR GUILT NOW. THERE'S ONLY ONE THING ON HIS MIND INSTEAD... SURVIVAL!



YOU'RE TREMBLING, DOWNING. IS IT BECAUSE YOU FINALLY UNDERSTAND? BECAUSE YOU FINALLY REALIZE THE PAIN ABOUT TO BE INFLICTED UPON YOU?



WHAT
YOU FEEL
FROM
ME...

THAT'S
NOT
TREMBLING.
THAT'S
RAGE!

MY
RAGE!

IS THAT
SO?!

AND
YOU'RE THE
ONE WHO
SHOULD BE
SCARED!

THEN
YOU'VE TRULY
GONE INSANE,
JIM
DOWNING!



IT'S TIME
WE ENDED THIS
GAME,
DOWNING!

IT'S
TIME YOU
ACCEPTED
YOUR
FATE.

THEN
END IT!



I'VE ALREADY
GIVEN YOU YOUR
CHANCE. BUT YOU
HESITATED!*

*Last issue -- Todd



YOU KNOW
YOUR TIME
IS SHORT. YOU
KNOW WHAT'S
COMING FOR
YOU-- DON'T
YOU?

DON'T
YOU?!





AND IT HAS TO
PISS YOU OFF THAT
YOU LET ME, A LOWLY
HUMAN, BE YOUR
DOWNFALL!



HOW ARE
YOU GOING
TO TELL HELL
YOU LET A MERE
MORTAL BRING
YOU TO YOUR
KNEES?



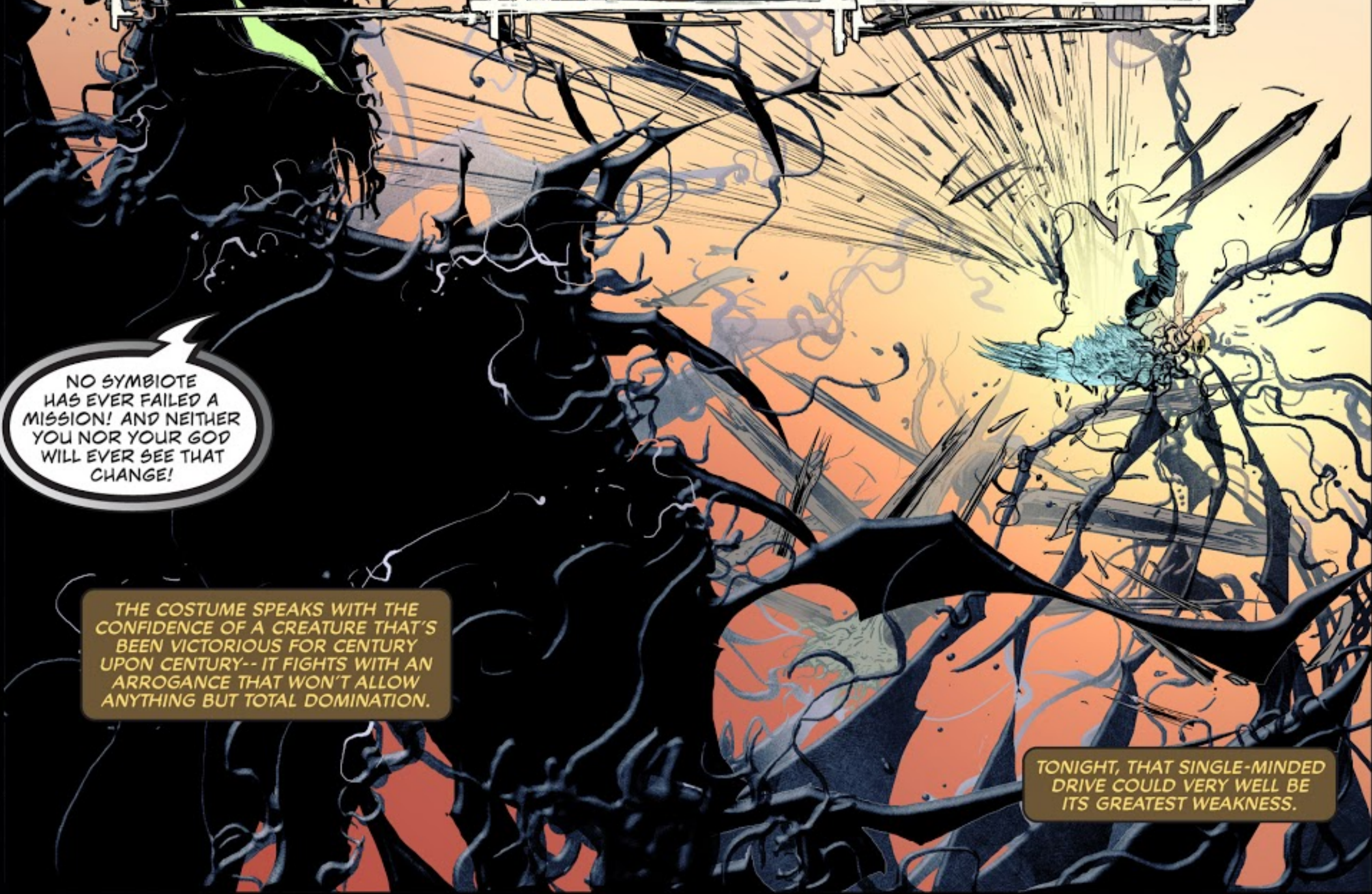
THWIK



SLIT



NO SYMBIOTE
HAS EVER FAILED A
MISSION! AND NEITHER
YOU NOR YOUR GOD
WILL EVER SEE THAT
CHANGE!



THE COSTUME SPEAKS WITH THE
CONFIDENCE OF A CREATURE THAT'S
BEEN VICTORIOUS FOR CENTURY-- IT FIGHTS WITH AN
ARROGANCE THAT WON'T ALLOW
ANYTHING BUT TOTAL DOMINATION.

TONIGHT, THAT SINGLE-MINDED
DRIVE COULD VERY WELL BE
ITS GREATEST WEAKNESS.

AND JIM DOWNING MEANS TO
EXPLOIT THAT WEAKNESS!

KRASHH!



ALL RIGHT,
MONSTER!
YOU WANT ME?
THEN YOU'LL HAVE
TO CATCH ME
FIRST. SO...



TRY
**CATCHING
ME!**



EXCUSE ME, GENERAL, I'VE GOT THE MAYOR'S OFFICE ON THE LINE FOR YOU.

PUT THEM ON SPEAKER PHONE.



THIS IS GENERAL WILTMORE. I ASSUME YOU'RE LOOKING FOR AN UPDATE ON OUR SHIP'S POSITION.

WE ARE. I THOUGHT YOU SAID YOU'D BE AT OUR DOCKS BY NOW. I HAVE PERSONNEL WAITING TO GET WORD TO EVERYONE TO START MOVING TOWARDS THOSE PORTS.

IS THERE A PROBLEM?



AT THE MOMENT, YES. BUT WE'RE TRYING TO SOLVE IT.



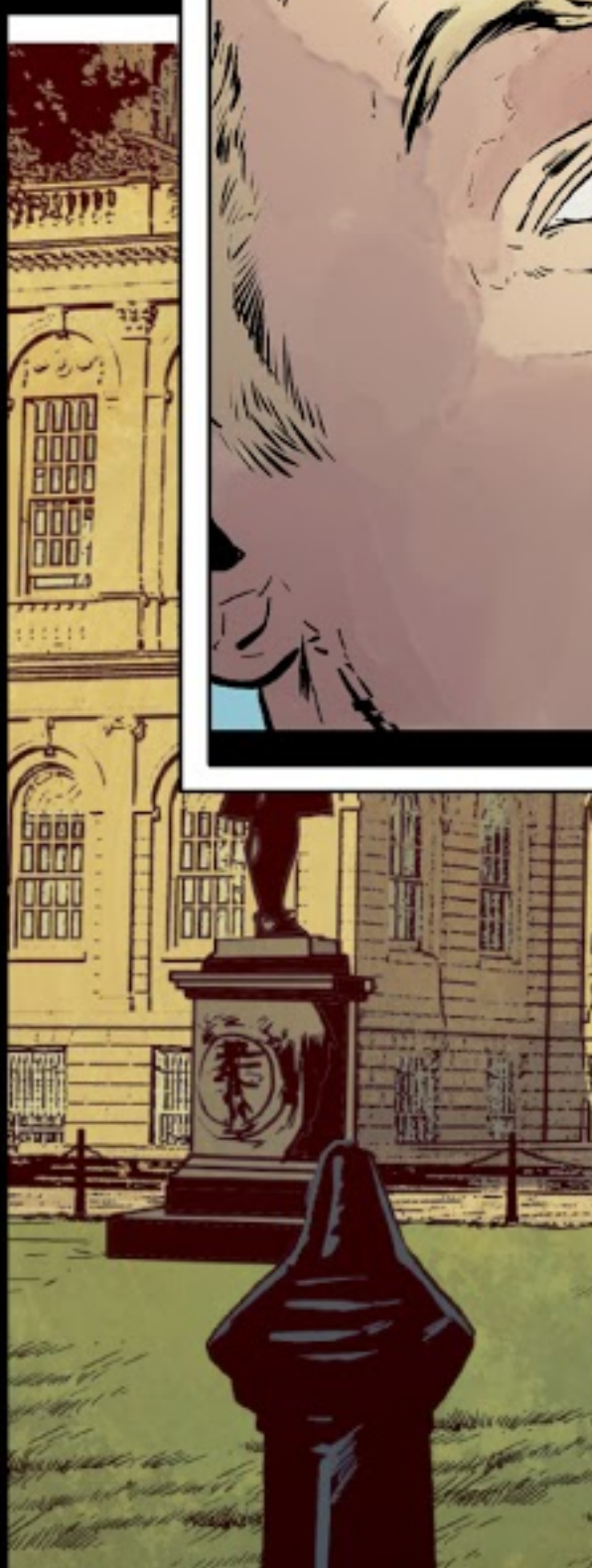
SOLVE IT?! WHAT THE HELL DOES THAT MEAN?



IT MEANS WE NEED ANOTHER PLAN. OUR SHIPS CAN'T GET TO YOU. I'M SORRY.



LISTEN, GENERAL, WE'RE RUNNING OUT OF OPTIONS OVER HERE. YOUR SHIPS WERE SUPPOSED TO BE A SOLUTION. IF I DON'T HAVE THEM...





I UNDERSTAND. AND BELIEVE ME, WE'RE DOING EVERYTHING WITHIN OUR POWER TO GET TO YOUR SHORES. BUT WHATEVER'S ATTACKING YOUR CITY... I THINK IT'S ALSO IN THE WATER AROUND YOU. AND UNDERNEATH IT!



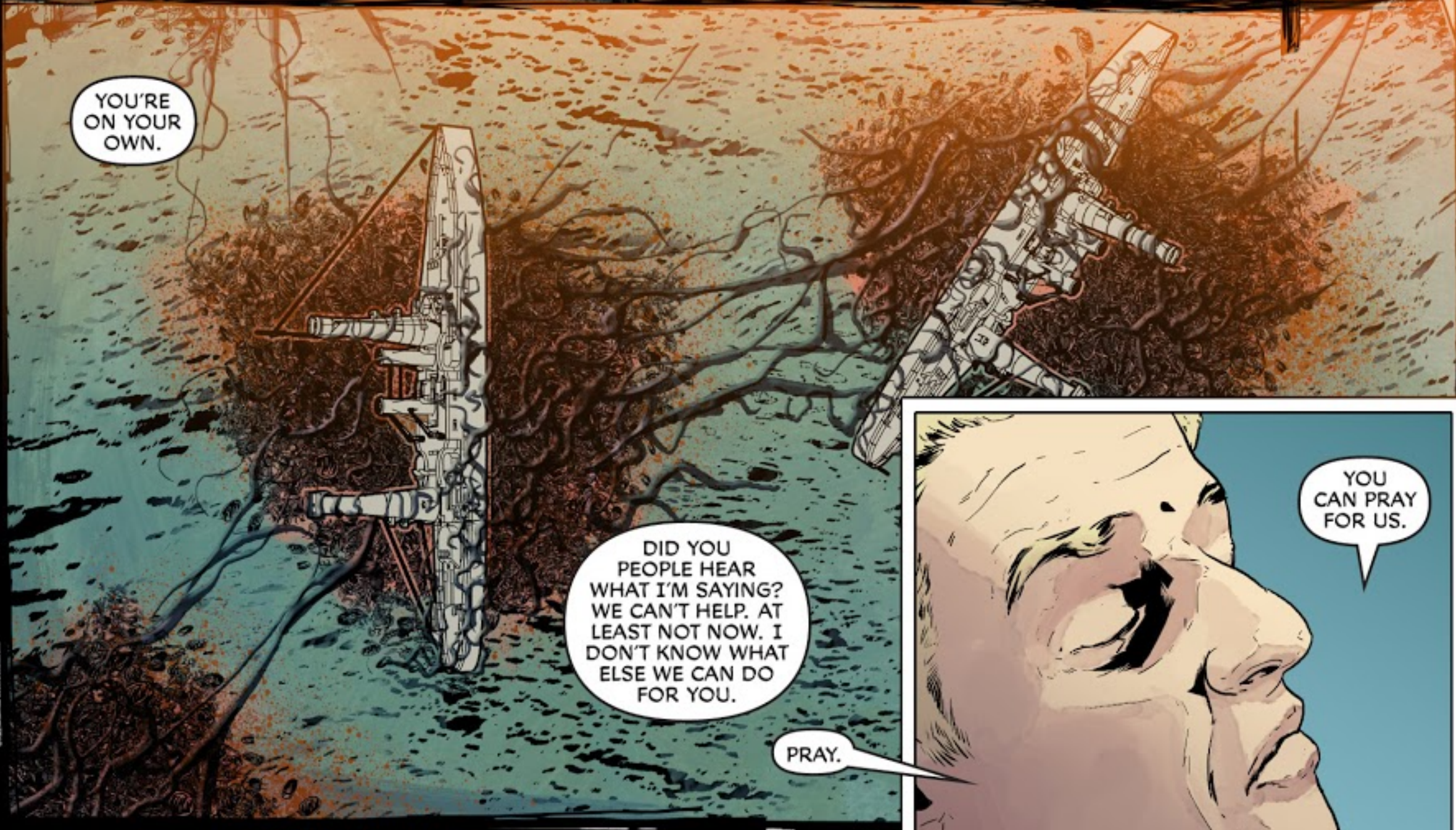
WE'VE MADE FOUR ATTEMPTS TO GET TO YOUR SIDE, AND WE CAN'T. AND AS SOON AS WE GET ANYWHERE NEAR YOU--AND I'M TALKING ABOUT FROM ANY POSITION-- THESE THINGS LIKE *GIANT SPIKES* POP OUT OF THE WATER. THEY'RE THE SIZE OF *ICEBERGS*. AND THEY'RE ALMOST COMPLETELY *SOLID* EVEN THOUGH THEY'RE MADE UP OF NOTHING BUT *BUGS*.



A FEW OF OUR BIGGER VESSELS TRIED CUTTING A PATH THROUGH THEM, BUT INSTEAD, THEY WERE BEACHED. RIGHT IN THE MIDDLE OF THE *GODDAMN WATER*! SOMETHING JUST GREW UP UNDERNEATH THEM AND LIFTED THEM OUT OF THE OCEAN. CAN YOU IMAGINE WHAT IT TAKES TO LIFT A BATTLESHIP? WELL, THEY DID THAT TO *ALL* OF THEM! SO OUR FLEET IS STRANDED.

AND GOD HELP ME...

YOU'RE ON YOUR OWN.



DID YOU PEOPLE HEAR WHAT I'M SAYING? WE CAN'T HELP. AT LEAST NOT NOW. I DON'T KNOW WHAT ELSE WE CAN DO FOR YOU.

PRAY.



YOU CAN PRAY FOR US.



YOU SEE HOW BIG THAT CROWD IS OUTSIDE? WE DON'T HAVE ROOM FOR ALL OF THEM!

WE CAN'T TURN THEM AWAY, SARGE. THEY SAID THEY CAN'T GET TO SHELTER.

GET A COUPLE OFFICERS AND WALK THEM TO FIREHOUSE 23, DOWN THE BLOCK. IT HAS A BIGGER HOLDING AREA. AND ALL THEIR TRUCKS ARE GONE.

YOU HEAR WHAT'S HAPPENING IN CENTRAL PARK? GOT A CALL ABOUT SOME GIANT MONSTER. THIRTY FEET TALL AND ALL BLACK! AND IT ISN'T A BUNCH OF BUGS! IT'S ONE CREATURE. WITH WHITE MARKS ON ITS FACE!



I WAS TOLD THE ARMY ISN'T SHOWING. WHAT'RE WE SUPPOSED TO DO? AIN'T ENOUGH COPS TO GO AROUND ON SOMETHING THIS BIG!

JEFF! IS THAT THING STILL AT THE PARK?

NO! THEY SAID IT WAS HEADING SOUTH. COMING OUR WAY. DOWN BROADWAY.

DETECTIVE! DETECTIVE WILLIAMS!

HERE'S THE LAST OF THE FILES YOU WANTED PULLED. DON'T KNOW IF WE GOT EVERYTHING. BECAUSE SOME OF THE INFO WAS ON COMPUTERS AND THEY JUST STOPPED WORKING.

THAT'S FINE. I APPRECIATE YOUR HELP PUTTING THIS TOGETHER.

I CAN HELP YOU WITH THIS IF YOU LIKE.

NO. I NEED TO DO THIS ALONE.

YOU MIND ME ASKING WHY YOU'RE DOING THIS. WHY NOW? WITH EVERYTHING THAT'S GOING ON?

I WISH I COULD TELL YOU. MAYBE LATER. BUT NOT NOW.

WHAT WAS HE GOING TO TELL THE YOUNG OFFICER? THAT HE THINKS A MAN WHO WAS IN A COMA NOW HAS GOD-LIKE HEALING POWERS? THAT THE SAME MAN DOUBLES AS SOME VIGILANTE FROM HELL, WITH A COSTUME AND POWERS WHICH MAY BE THE CAUSE OF ALL THE TERROR IN THE STREETS?



DETECTIVE MAX 'TWITCH' WILLIAMS HAS BEEN WITH THE DEPARTMENT FOR NEARLY 17 YEARS. HE'S LEARNED WHEN TO KEEP HIS MOUTH SHUT, ESPECIALLY WHEN IT COMES TO THE SUPERNATURAL.

AND HE HATES THAT HE'S GROWN SO ACCUSTOMED TO IT.



YOU GET
WHAT YOU
WERE LOOKING
FOR?

MOST
OF IT.

GREG SAID
THEY'RE SENDING ALL
OF US ON TO THE STREETS.
THEY NEED US IN THE
BRIEFING ROOM IN TEN
MINUTES. CHIEF SAID
NOT TO BE LATE.



F*CK
THE CHIEF!!



THERE ISN'T
TIME! I NEED
YOU TO LOOK
AT THIS.

AND I
NEED YOU
TO DO IT
NOW!

GRAB A CHAIR.
YOU'RE GOING TO
BE AS STUNNED
AS I WAS.

UM...

SURE. LOOK
TWITCH, I KNOW
YOU'RE WORRIED
ABOUT THINGS-- ABOUT
YOUR FAMILY. AFTER
THIS SETTLES, YOU
GO HOME AND DO
WHAT YOU NEED
TO DO.

LET ME
ASK YOU
SOMETHING,
SAM...



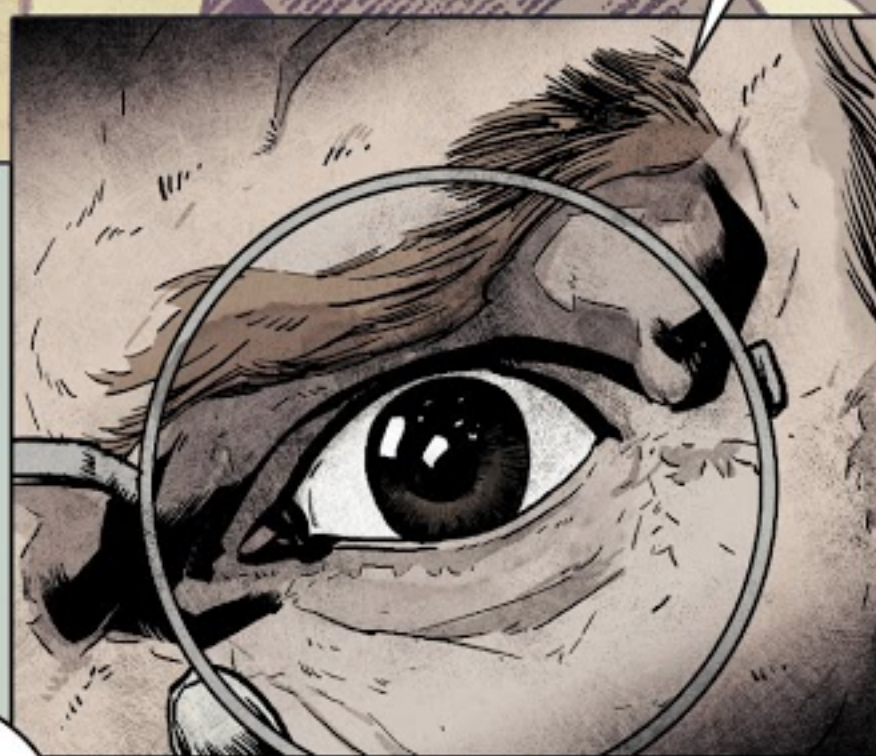
WHAT
IF THIS
**DOESN'T
SETTLE?**
WHAT IF HELP
DOESN'T
GET HERE IN
TIME?

DOWNING HAS
SPECIAL POWERS AND
THEY'RE A HECK OF A LOT DIFFERENT
THAN SIMMONS' WERE. HE'S A
SPAWN **AND** A GENETIC FREAK!
MAYBE THAT'S WHY HE WAS ABLE
TO HEAL THOSE PEOPLE. BUT IT
WAS A CON! I CHECKED... IT'S ALL
IN FRONT OF YOU! EVERY ONE OF
THOSE PEOPLE HE HEALED--
THEY'RE DYING!

READ IT
YOURSELF!
MOST OF IT'S
IN THERE.

A COUPLE
ARE ALREADY
DEAD.

OR
MISSING.

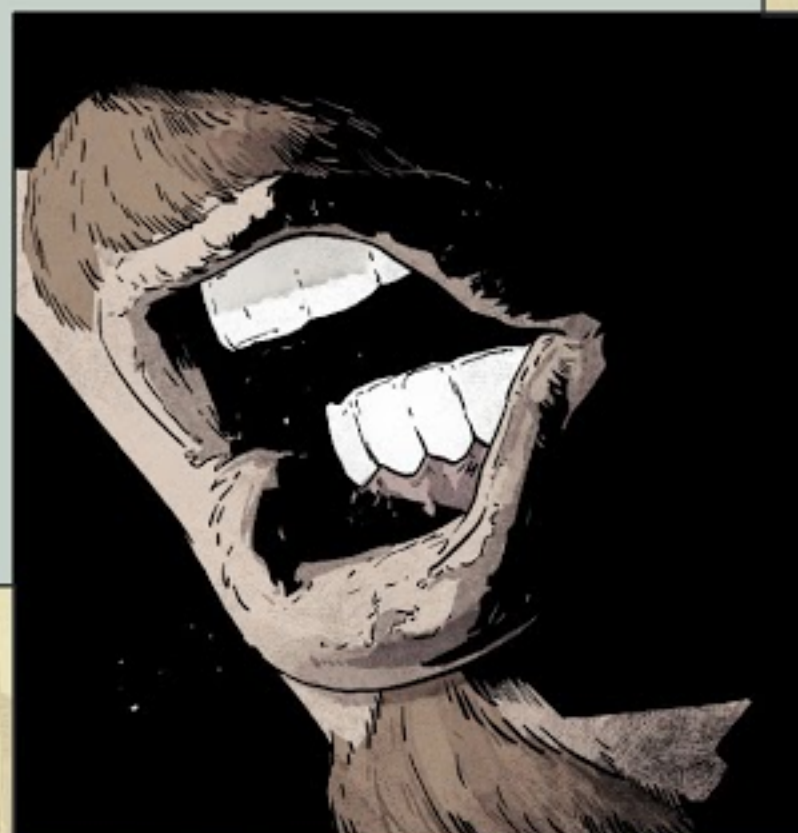


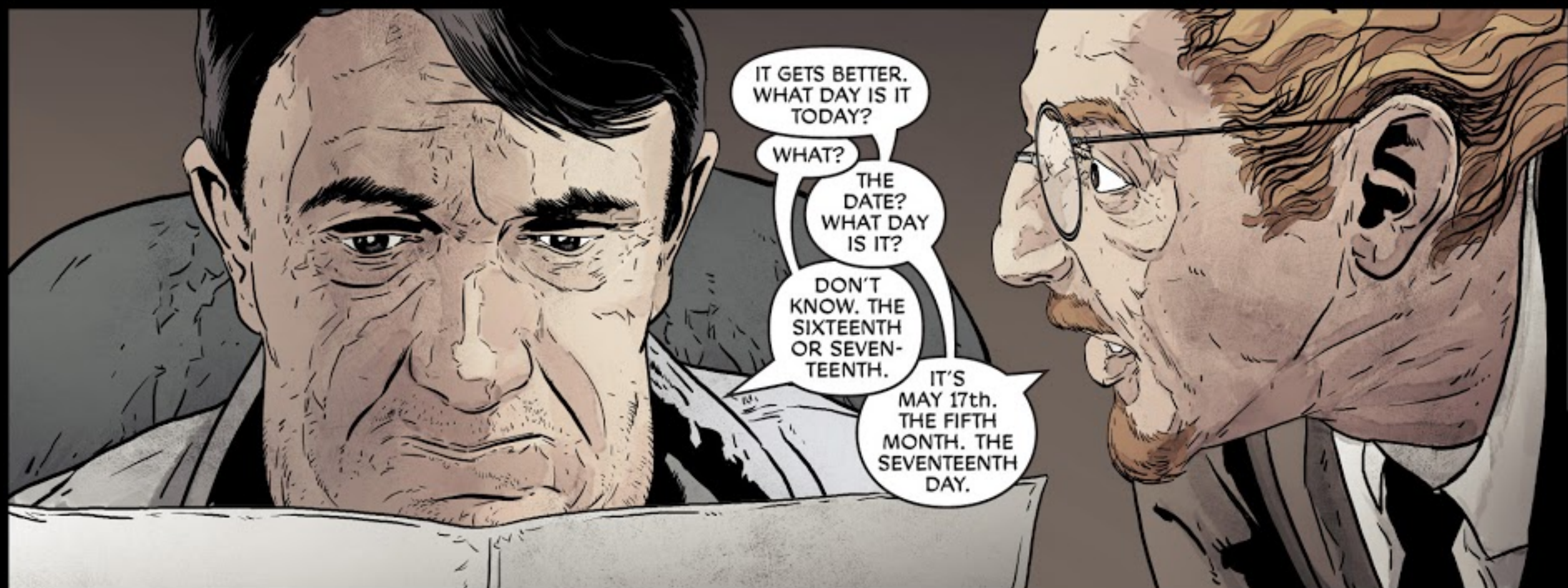
AND THE
CAUSE OF THEIR
DEATH WAS **POISON!**
SOMETHING IN THEIR
BLOODSTREAM KILLED
THEM, AND THE
DOCTORS DON'T
KNOW **WHAT!**

A FEW OF THEM,
DOWNING DIDN'T EVEN MEAN
TO HEAL. HE ONLY TOUCHED THEM
ACCIDENTLY. OR SHOOK THEIR HAND.
I'M GUESSING IT HAS SOMETHING TO DO
WITH HIS COSTUME. SIMMONS ALWAYS
SAID HE WAS FIGHTING IT! AND NOW THAT
COSTUME... THAT **THING...** IS MOVING DOWN
BROADWAY AND IT'S **TOUCHING**
EVERYTHING IN ITS' PATH!
EVERYTHING!

SO IF I'M
RIGHT-- AND I
HOPE TO GOD I'M
NOT-- THIS THING
ISN'T GOING TO GET
SETTLED! NOT THE
NORMAL WAY!

AND IF THAT
ISN'T ENOUGH FOR
YOU... TAKE A LOOK AT
WHAT IT SAYS ABOUT ALL
THOSE DEAD PRISONERS
THAT SOMEHOW MAKE
UP DOWNING'S TEN
FINGERPRINTS!









SOME WILL SPEAK IN AWED VOICES OF HOW AN ANGEL DROPPED FROM THE HEAVENS AND HELPED PAVE THE WAY TO THEIR SAFETY--TO THEIR SALVATION. AND THEY'LL BE FOREVER CHANGED BY THAT EXPERIENCE. OTHERS, THEY WILL WEEP.

Good.

He's following me.



NOT BECAUSE THEY DIDN'T SURVIVE. OR BECAUSE THEY WEREN'T INJURED, THOUGH HUNDREDS WERE. NO...



THEY'LL CRY BECAUSE THIS WILL BE THE LAST TIME THEY'LL LAY EYES UPON THIS WINGED SPECTER FOR THE REST OF THEIR LIVES.



AND THEY'LL ALL WISH THEY COULD HAVE TOLD HIM HOW VERY, VERY GRATEFUL THEY WERE FOR HIS SACRIFICE.

HE LED THE BLACK MONSTER AWAY THROUGH THE CITY. THE GIGANTIC CREATURE POURED ITS WAY THROUGH THE STREETS, LIKE A BLACK WAVE OF TAR.



BLOCK AFTER CITY BLOCK... UNTIL GOD'S MESSENGER DISAPPEARED BEHIND THE TOWERING CITYSCAPE TO SOME UNKNOWN DESTINATION.



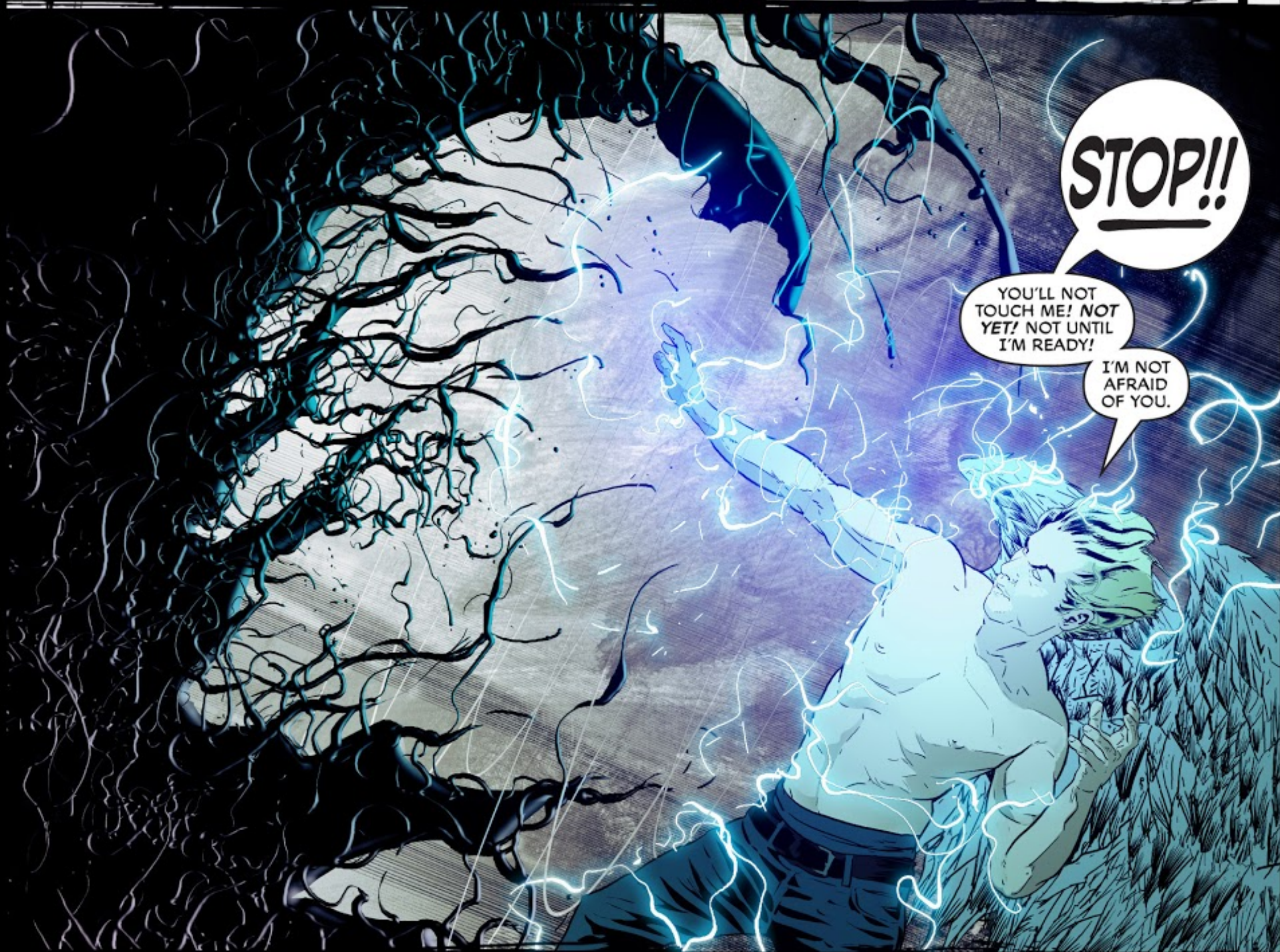
UNKNOWN TO ALL BUT HIM. AND WHEN HE STRODE DEEPER INTO THE MAZE OF ALLEYS, TOWARD ITS ENTRANCE, HE SLOWLY VANISHED INTO THE SHADOWS.

AND... THE 'THING' FOLLOWED.

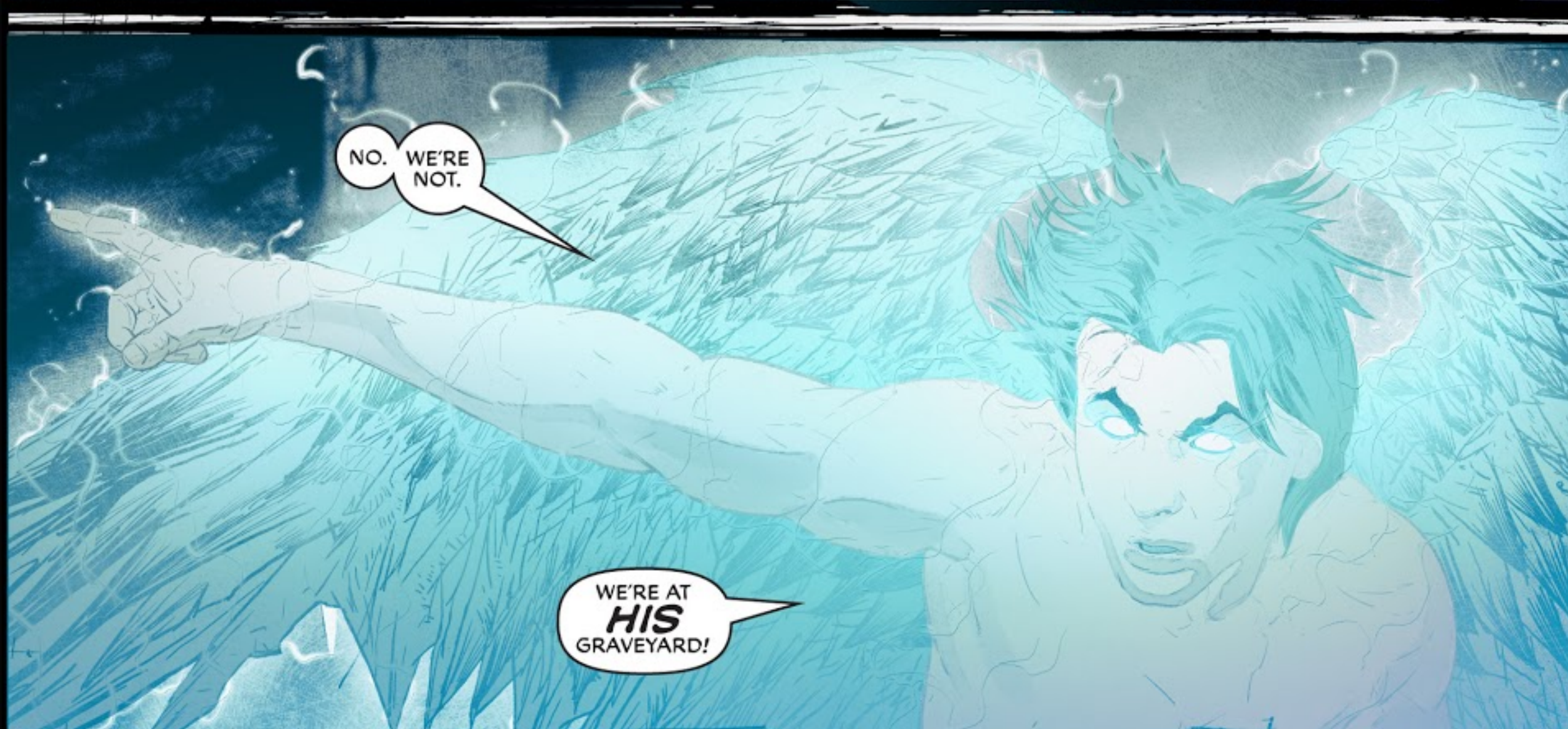




AND WITH THAT TAUNT, THE BLACK, LIQUID MONSTER CATAPULTED FORWARD-- INTENT ON CRUSHING ITS OPPONENT!



SO FACE ME! LIKE A MAN!! SHOW ME YOU'RE NOT AFRAID!





THIS IS WHERE HE
DIED.* AL SIMMONS.
YOU REMEMBER HIM,
DON'T YOU? THE MAN
YOU CALLED YOUR
MASTER!

HE WAS
NEVER MY
MASTER! I
CONTROLLED
HIM!

YEAH? HOW
DID THAT WORK
OUT FOR YOU? HE
KILLED HIMSELF!
AND WHEN HE DID--
I WOKE UP! I USED TO
WONDER, WHY? WHY
DID HE DO IT? AND
WHY CHOOSE TO
DIE IN SUCH A
GODFORSAKEN
PLACE?

*Issue 185--Todd



IT WAS
BECAUSE HE
KNEW.



AND
NOW I DO
TOO.



HE KNEW
THIS SLIVER OF THE
'DEAD ZONE' WAS HERE,
AWAY FROM THE OTHER PORTALS.
HE STOOD RIGHT HERE. RIGHT WHERE
I AM NOW. HE MUST HAVE TURNED HIS
BACK TO THE WALL. KNOWING THAT
WHEN HIS HEAD EXPLODED-- WHEN HE
BLEW HIS BRAINS OUT-- THAT HE'D FALL
BACKWARDS... INTO THE **'DEAD ZONE'**!
HE COULDN'T KILL HIMSELF IN IT
BECAUSE NONE OF US HAVE
POWERS INSIDE THE ZONE.
NOT HEAVEN. NOT HELL.
NOT ANYONE!



SO HE
GOT AS CLOSE
AS HE POSSIBLY
COULD.

AND AS HE
DIED, HE CROSSED
THE LINE. YOUR
MASTER CROSSED IT
INTENTIONALLY.



BECAUSE
HE KNEW.



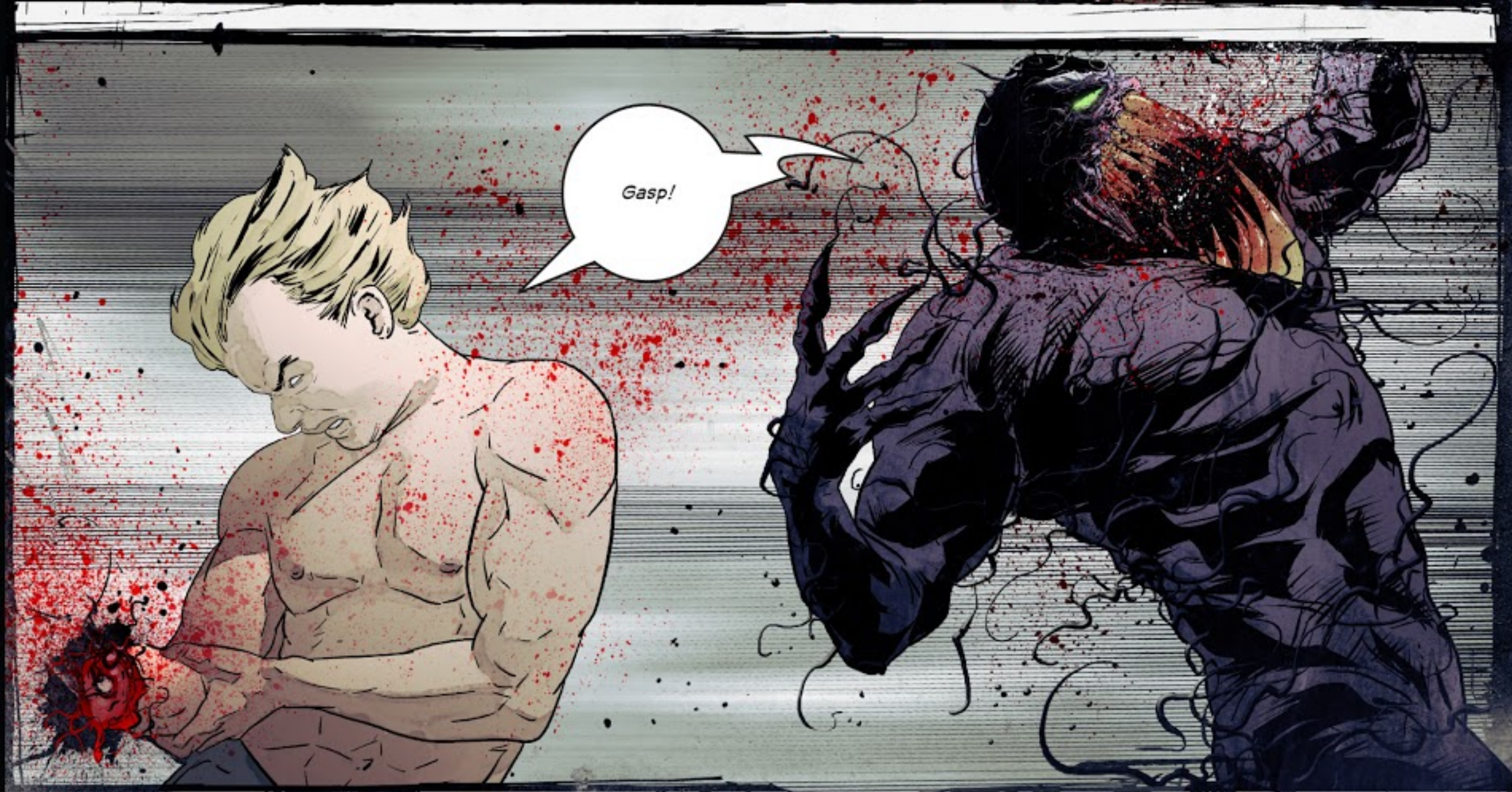


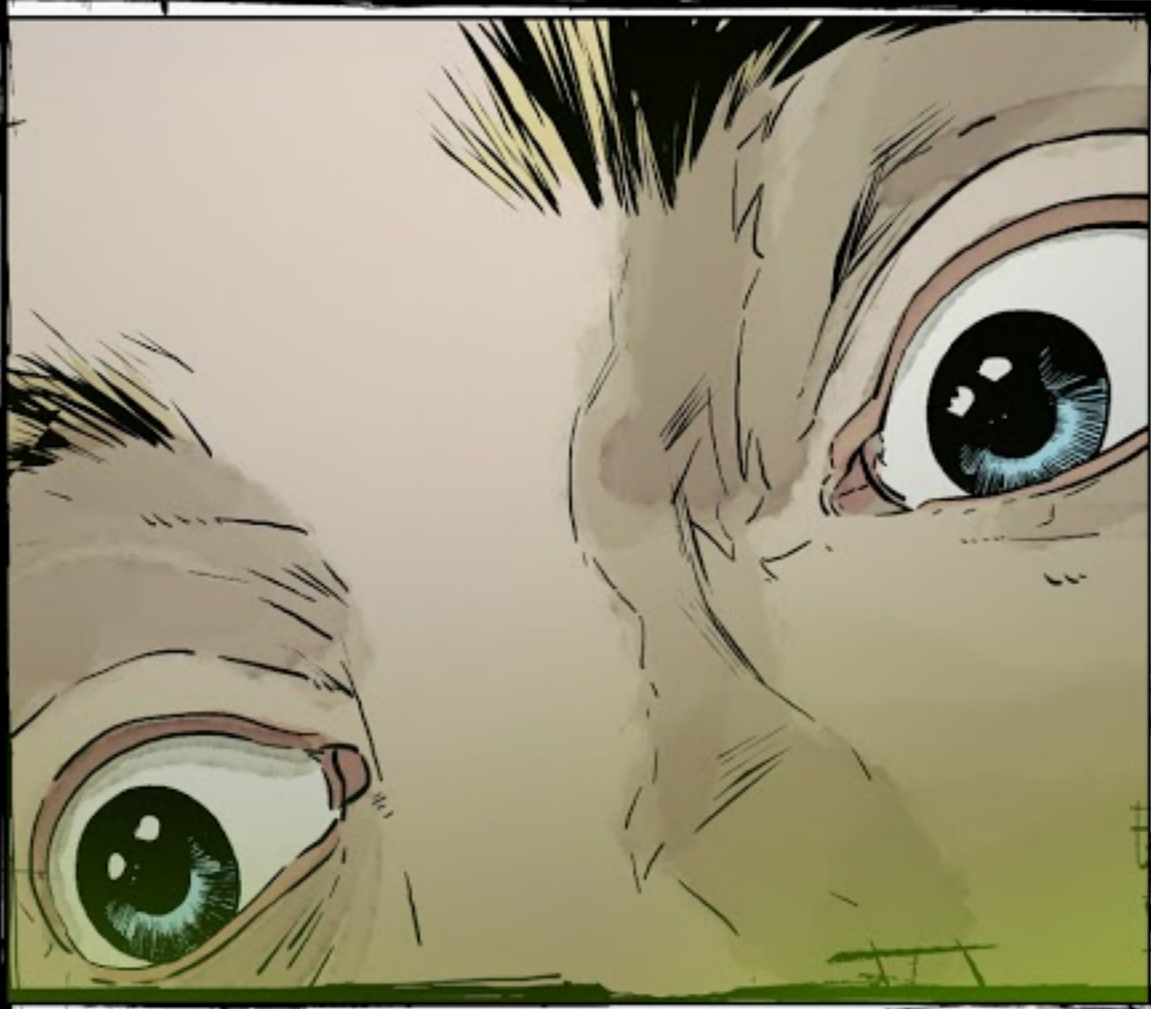
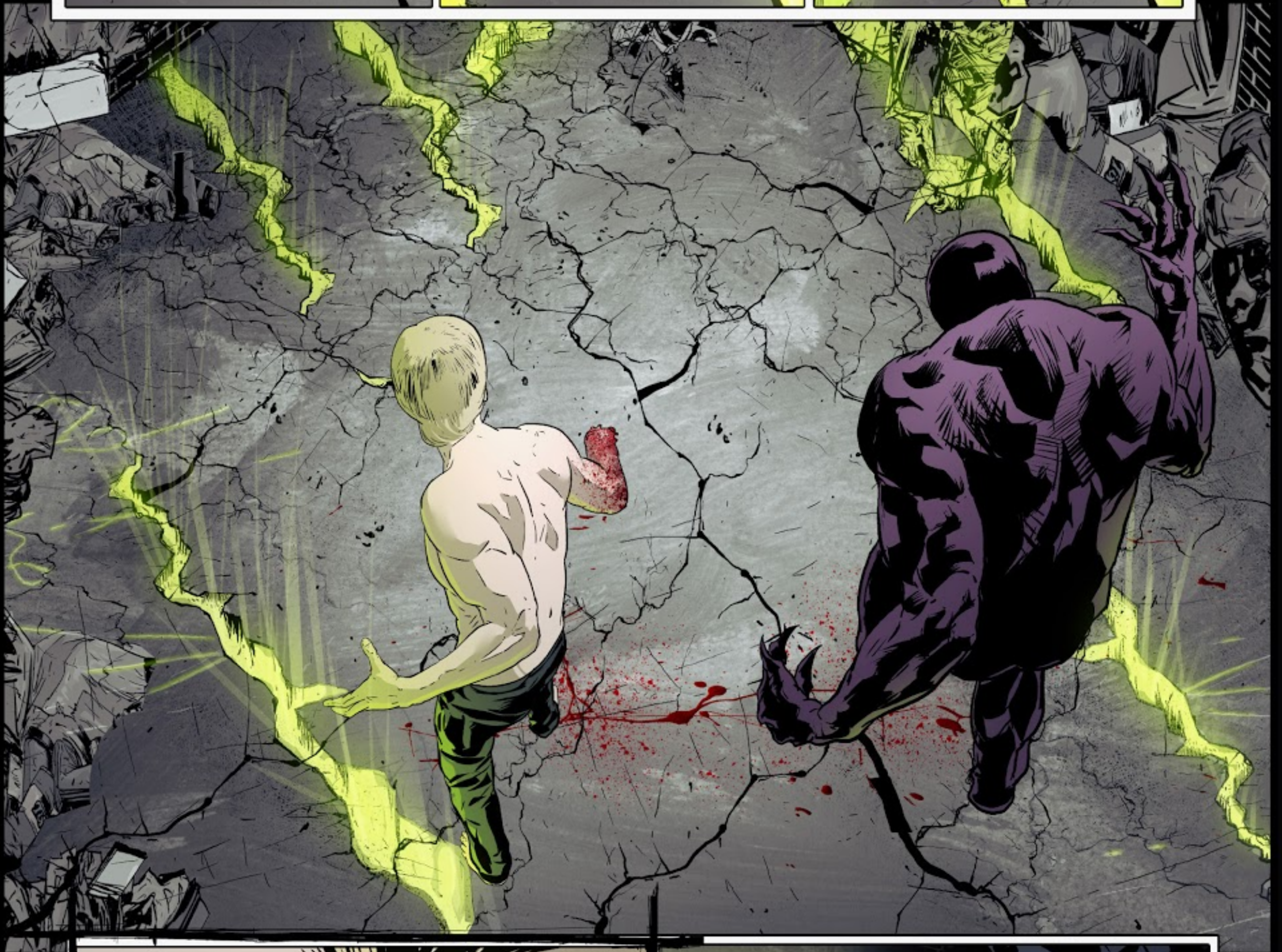
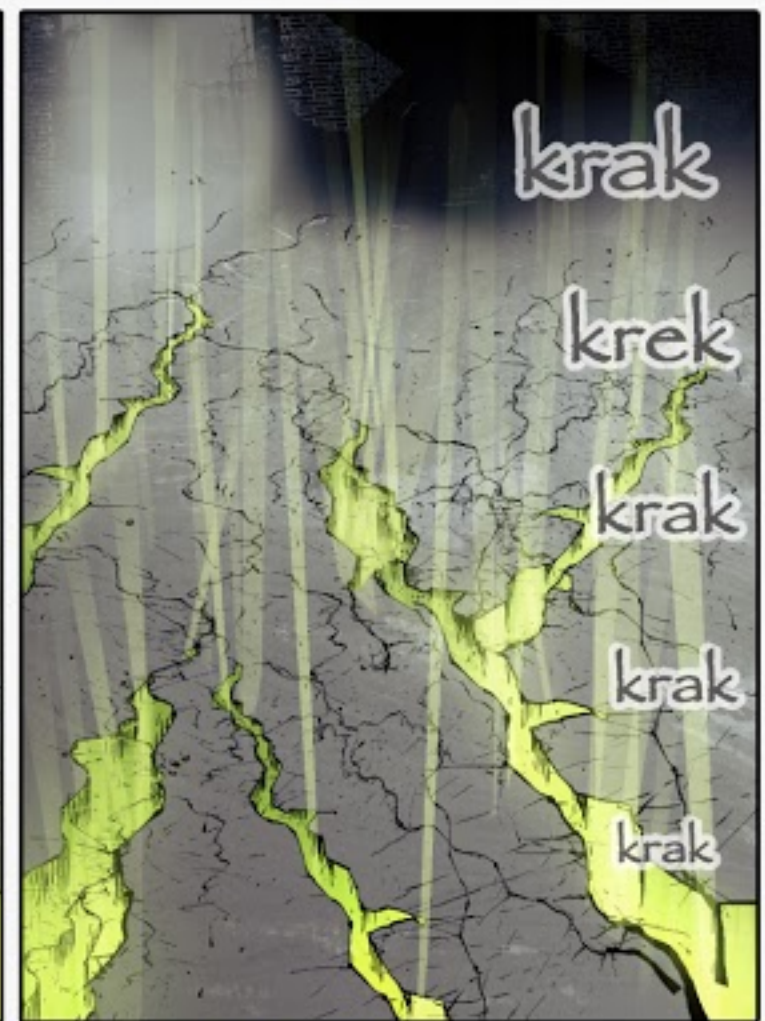


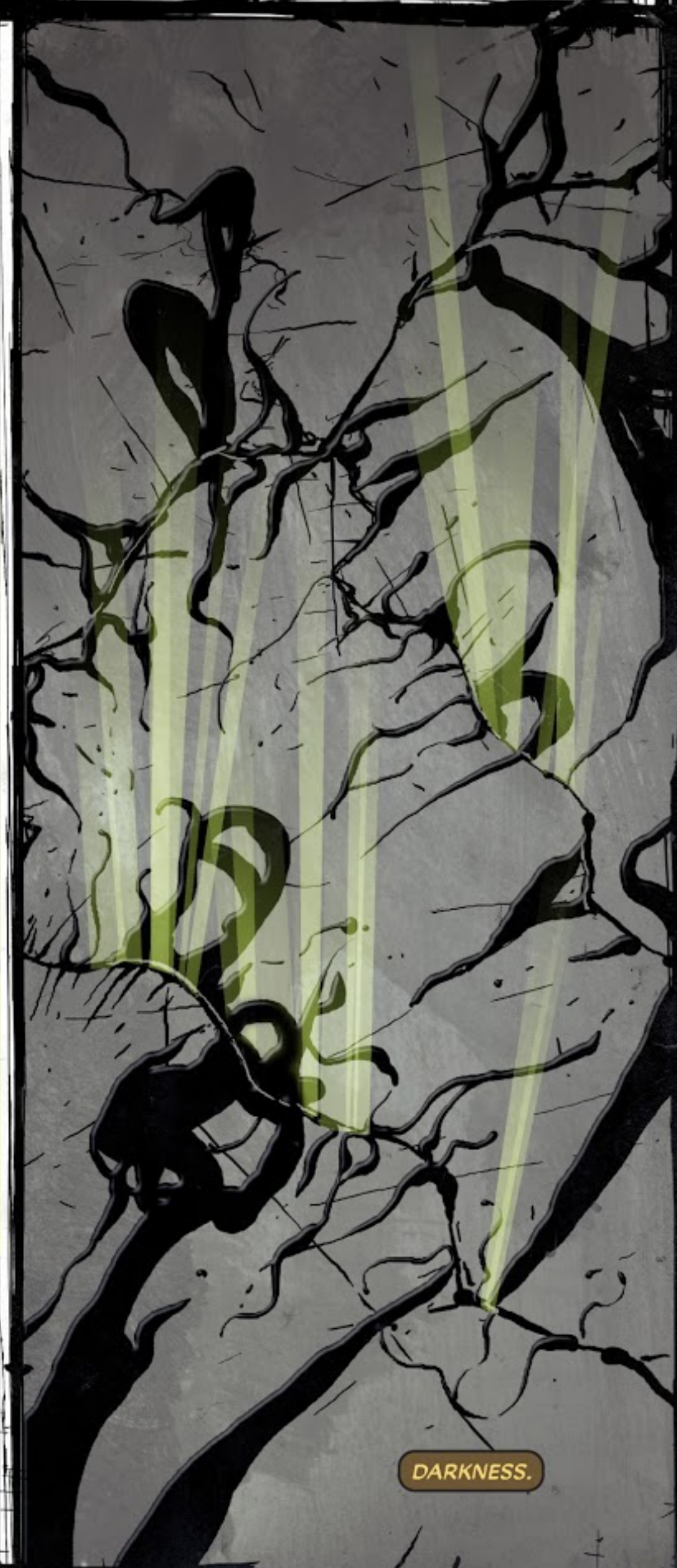
WHY? THAT'S
THE QUESTION,
ISN'T IT?

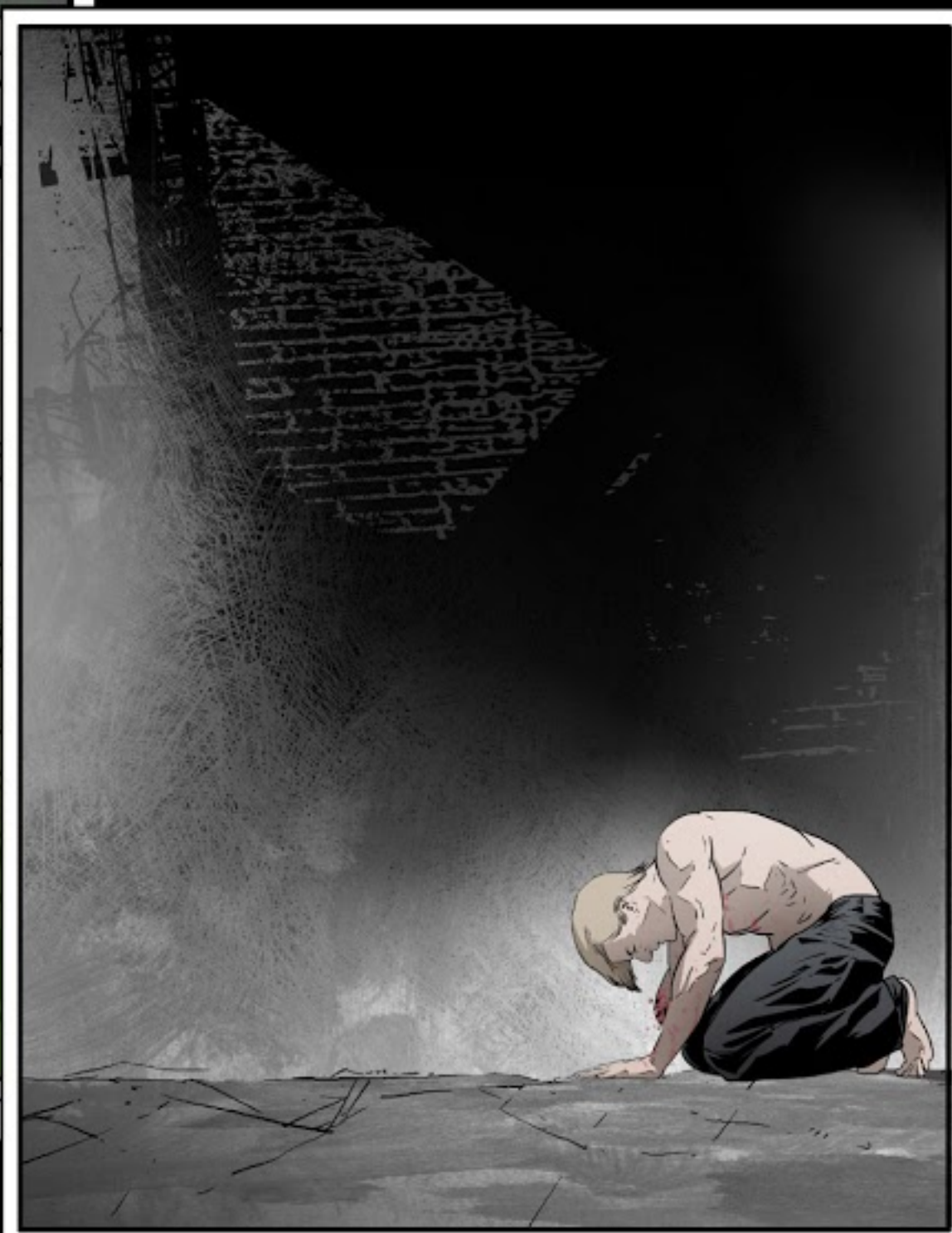
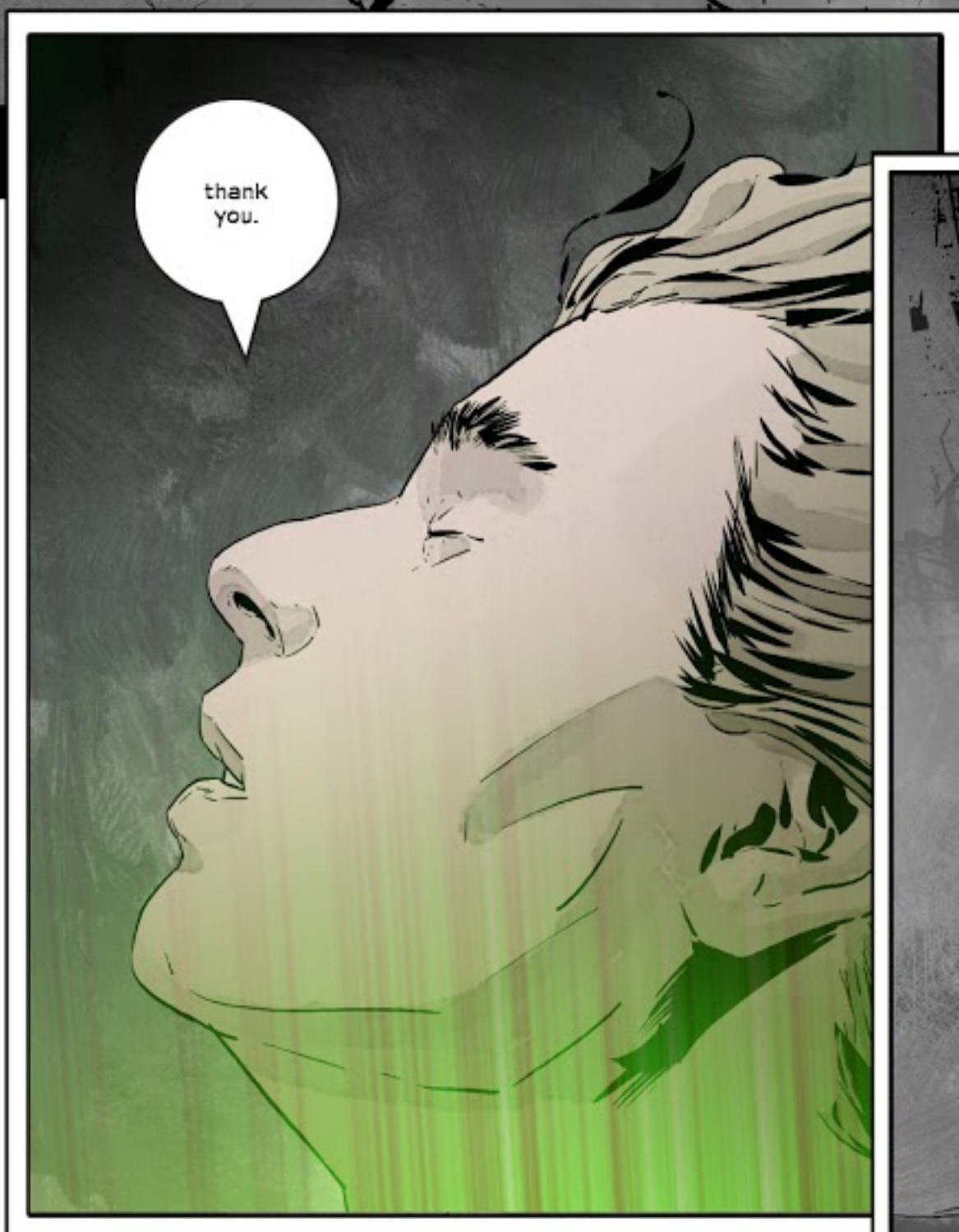
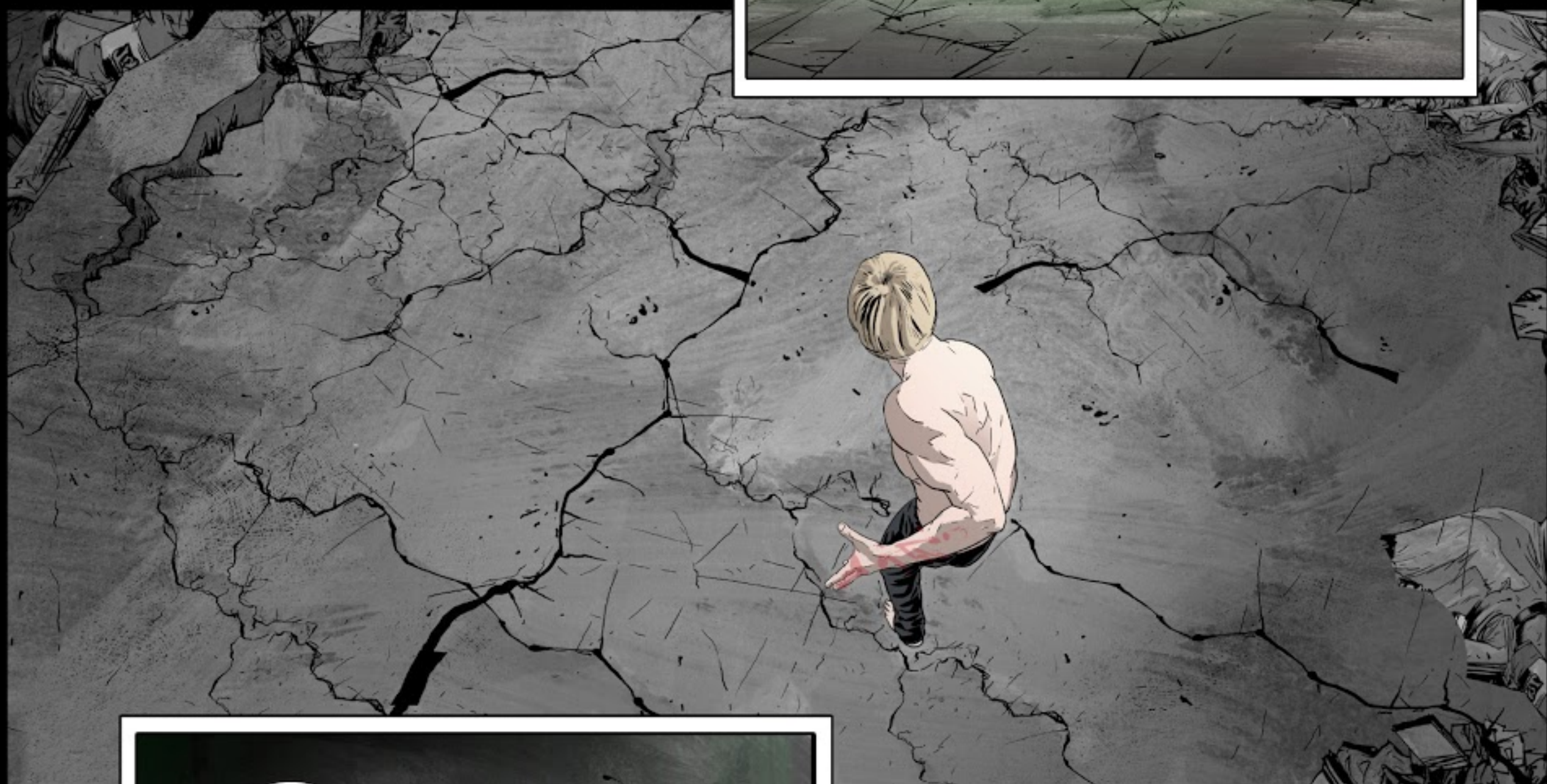
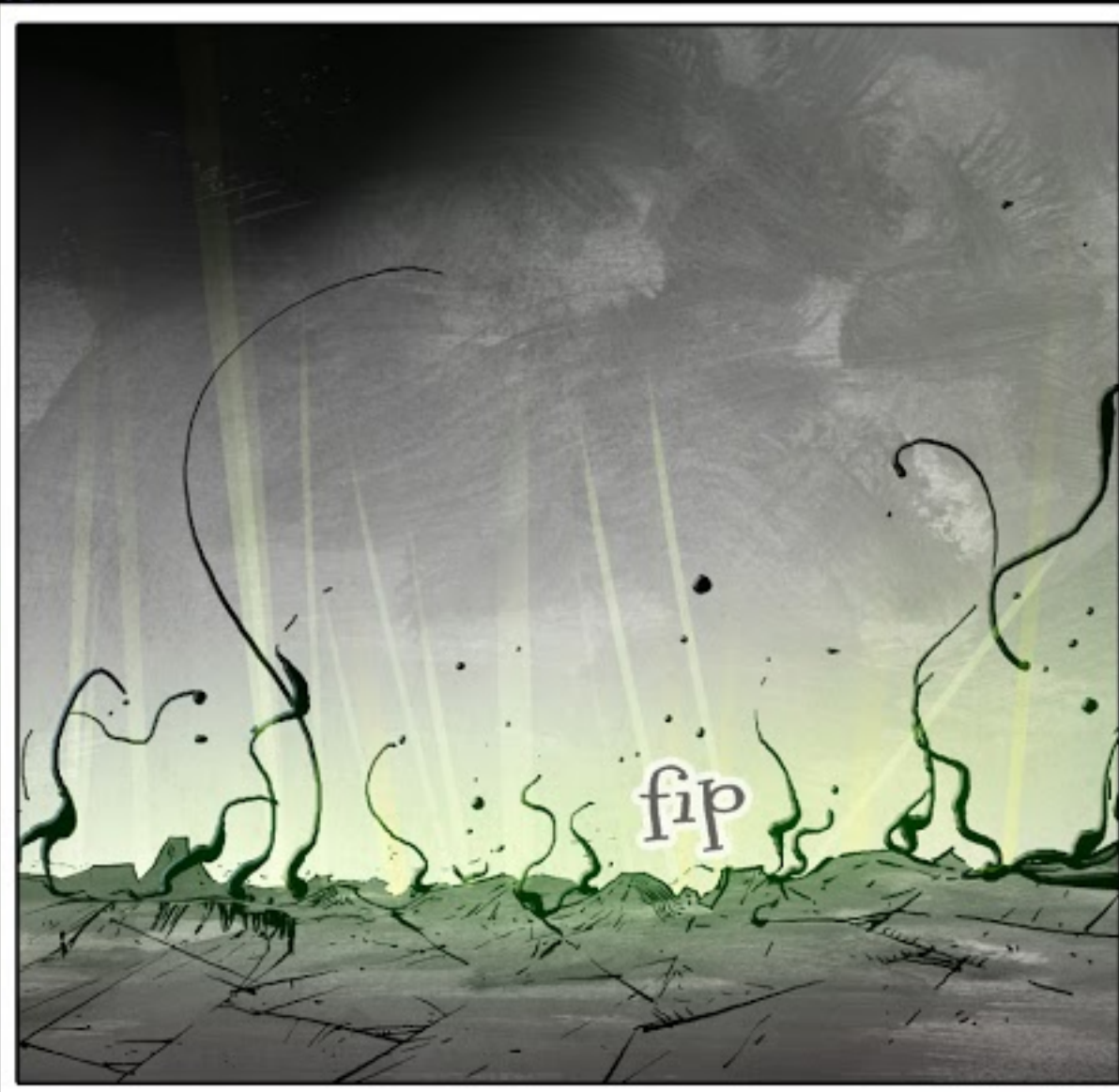
WELL, HERE'S
ONE LAST QUESTION:
WHAT HAPPENS WHEN
SOMEONE *INSIDE* THE
'DEAD ZONE' TOUCHES
SOMETHING *OUTSIDE*
OF IT? WHAT
HAPPENS THEN?

WHAT
HAPPENS!?





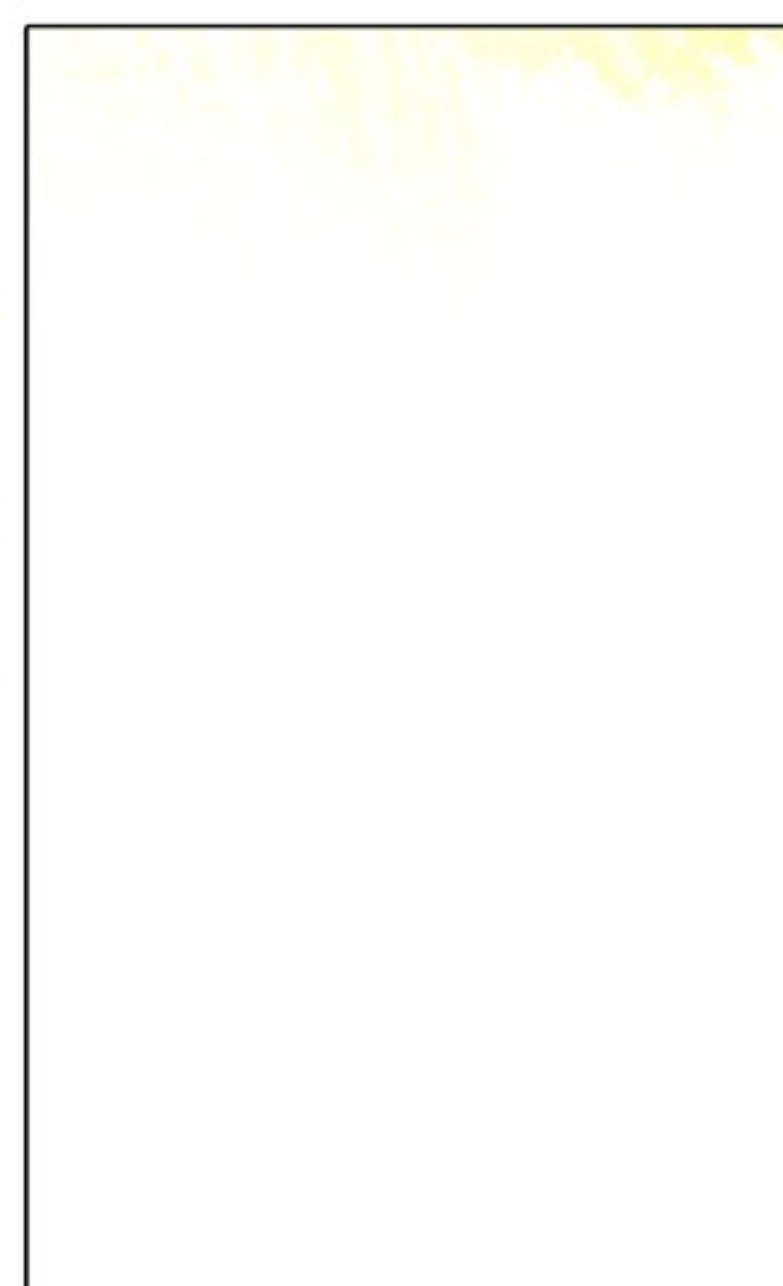
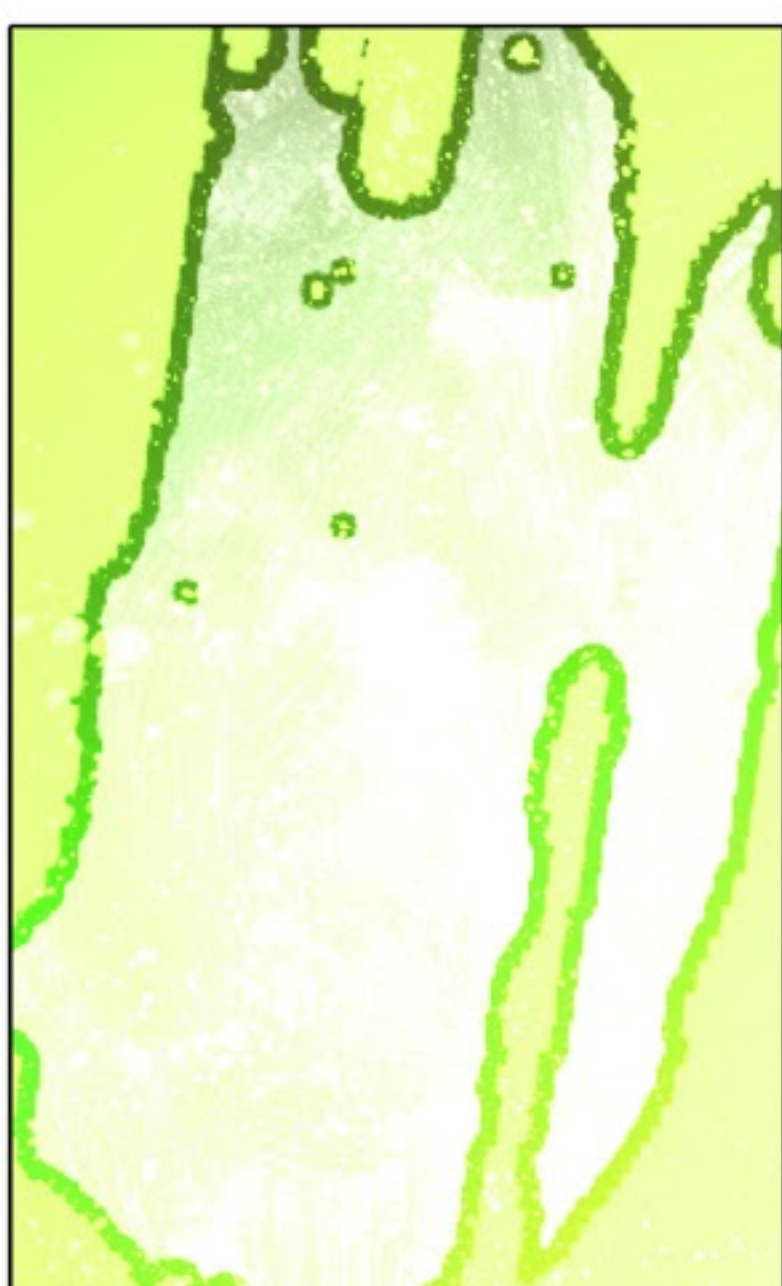
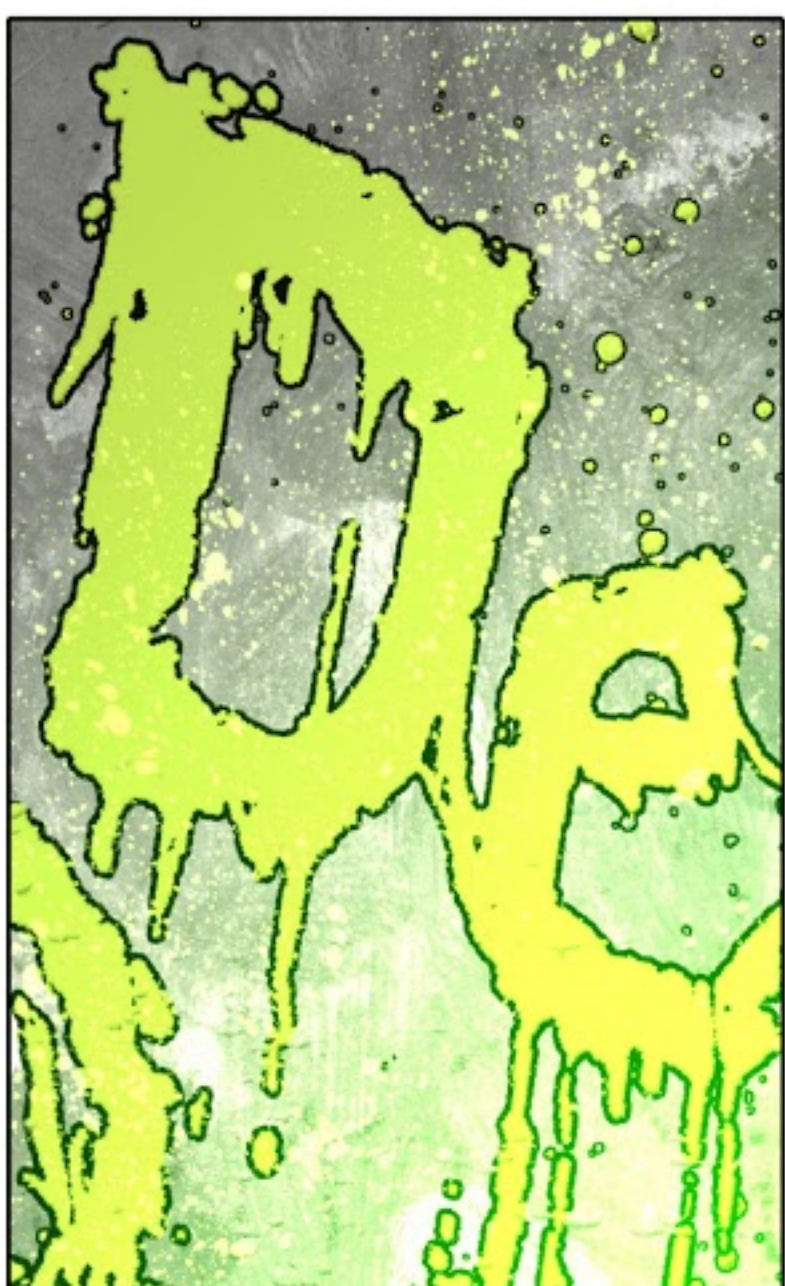
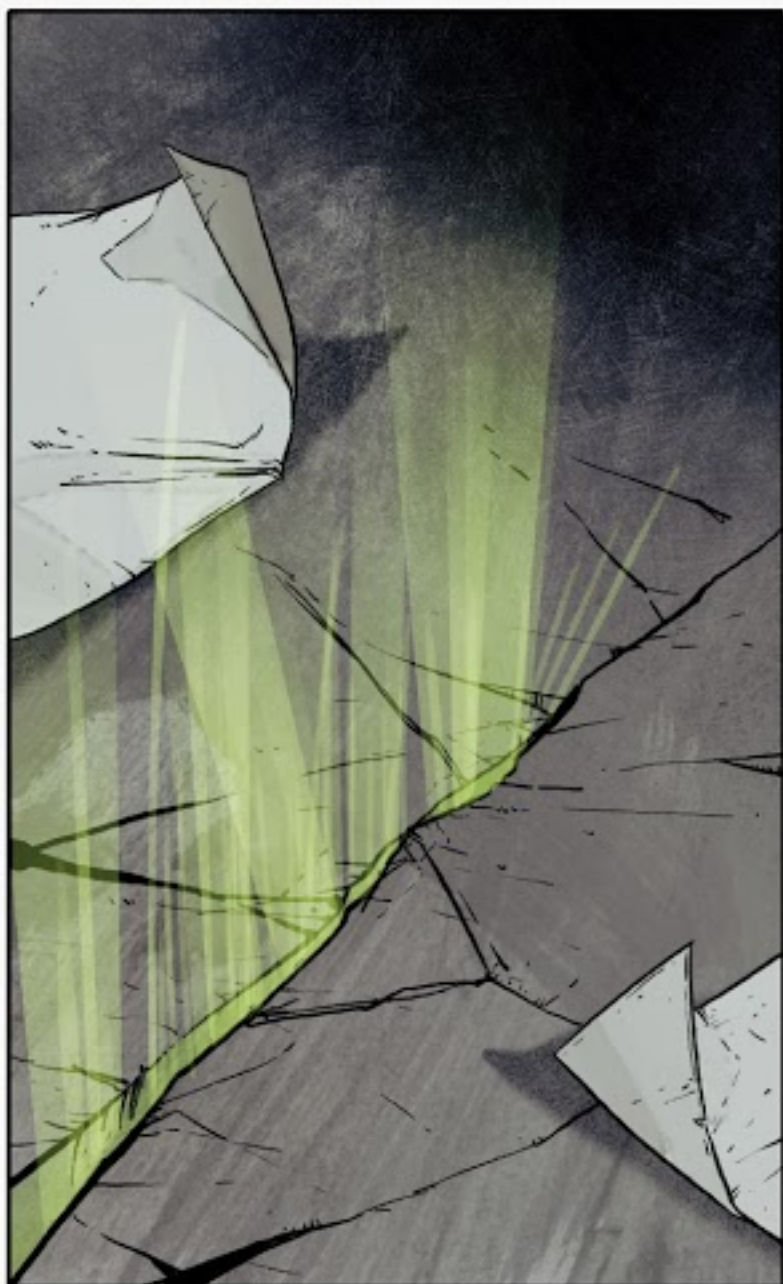


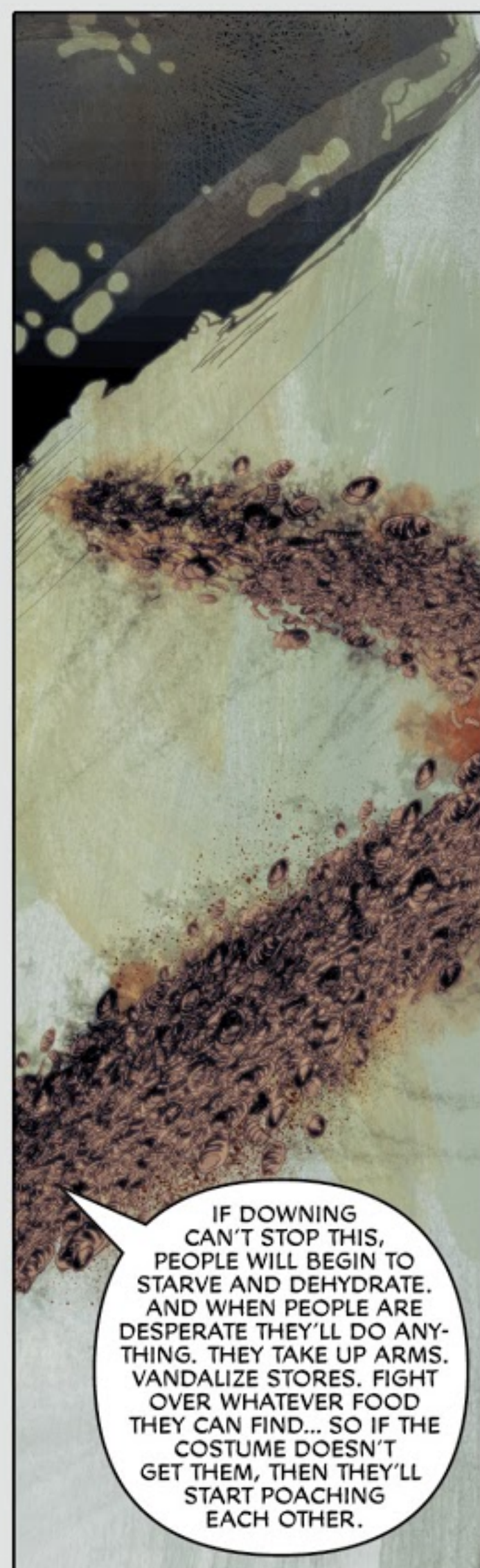


BUT SOMETHING
ELSE HAPPENS...



THE DARK ALSO COMES
FOR THE LIGHT!

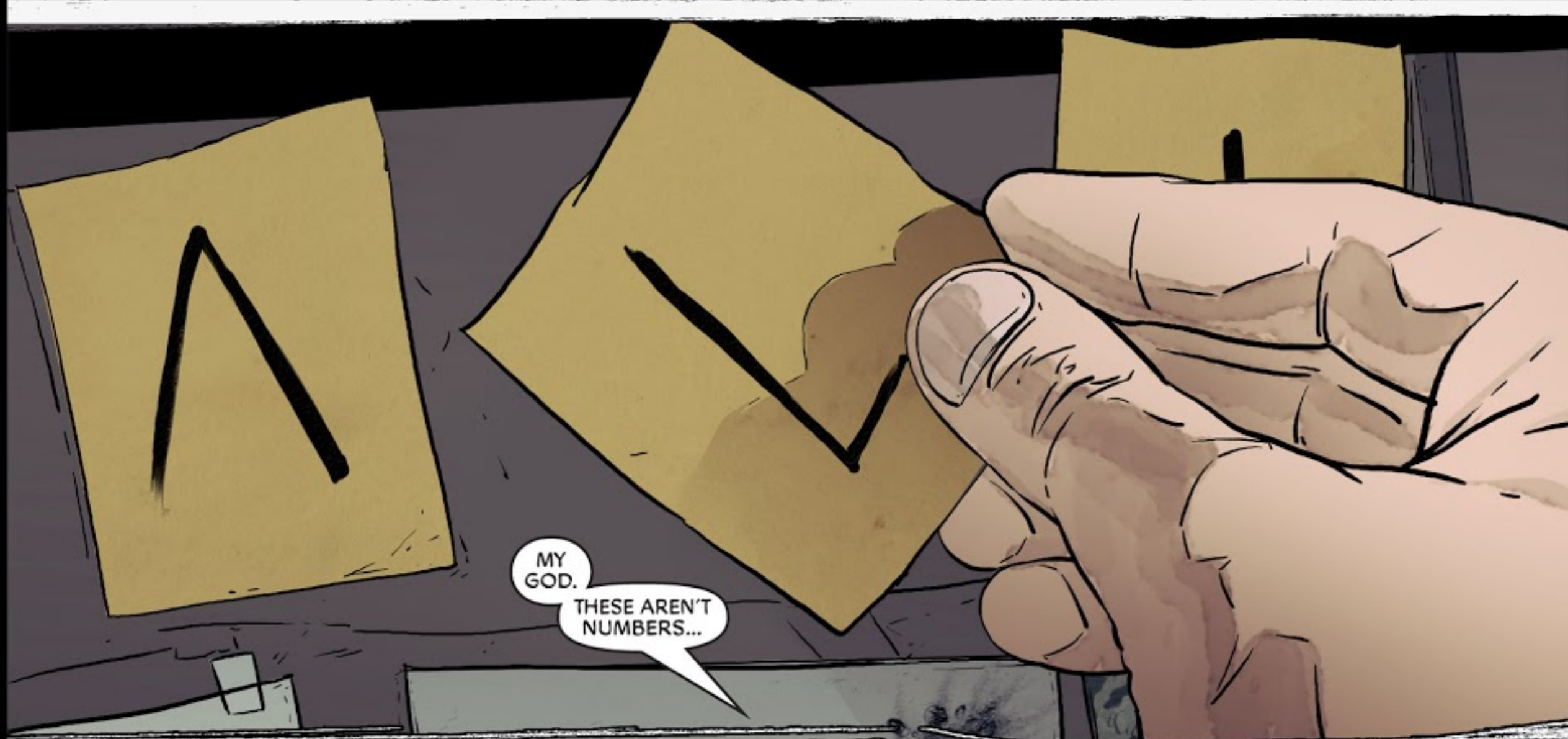






YOU SAID
UPSIDE
DOWN!







UNTIL THE TIDE OF BUGS IS
SO HIGH, NO ONE CAN SEE
ANY PART OF THE GROUND.

STREET AFTER STREET
WILL FILL DEEPER AND
DEEPER.



AND AS THE FLOOD
OF NEVER-ENDING EVIL
CONTINUES TO POUR
INTO THE CITY, THE ONLY
THING LEFT IN ITS WAKE
IS DARKNESS.

BLANKETED IN DARKNESS,
THEY PRAY.

AS DEATH DESCENDS
UPON THEM... AS THEY ARE
BLANKETED IN THE BLACK...

THEY PRAY.

PRAY FOR HELP
THEY CANNOT SEE.

AND WHY SHOULD
GOD ANSWER
THEM?

WHY WOULD HE
LET ANYTHING
LIVE IN THIS
ABYSS?

BECAUSE THIS
ISN'T ABOUT
GOD.

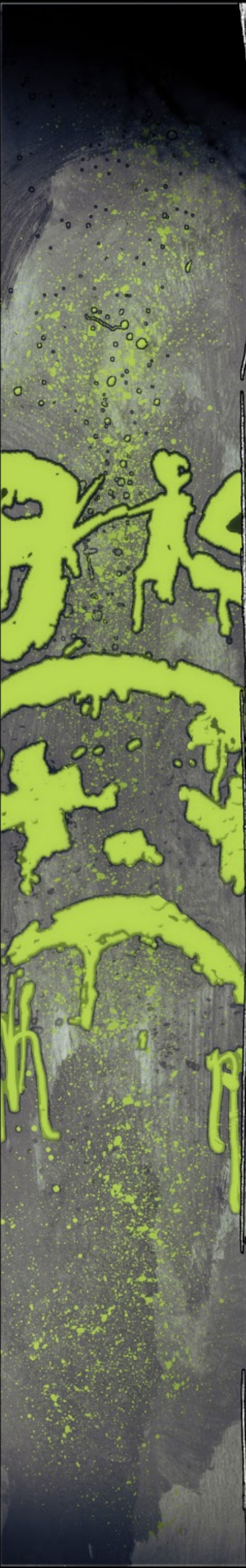
IT'S ABOUT
THE HUMAN
CONDITION.
AND ITS TIME
HAS COME!

IT IS MAY 17th.
ALMOST
TEN MINUTES
BEFORE
EIGHT P.M.

THE DATE IS 5 -17.

THE TIME IS 7:51.

IT'S HIS TIME!



'LONG LIVE
THE KING.'

L I V

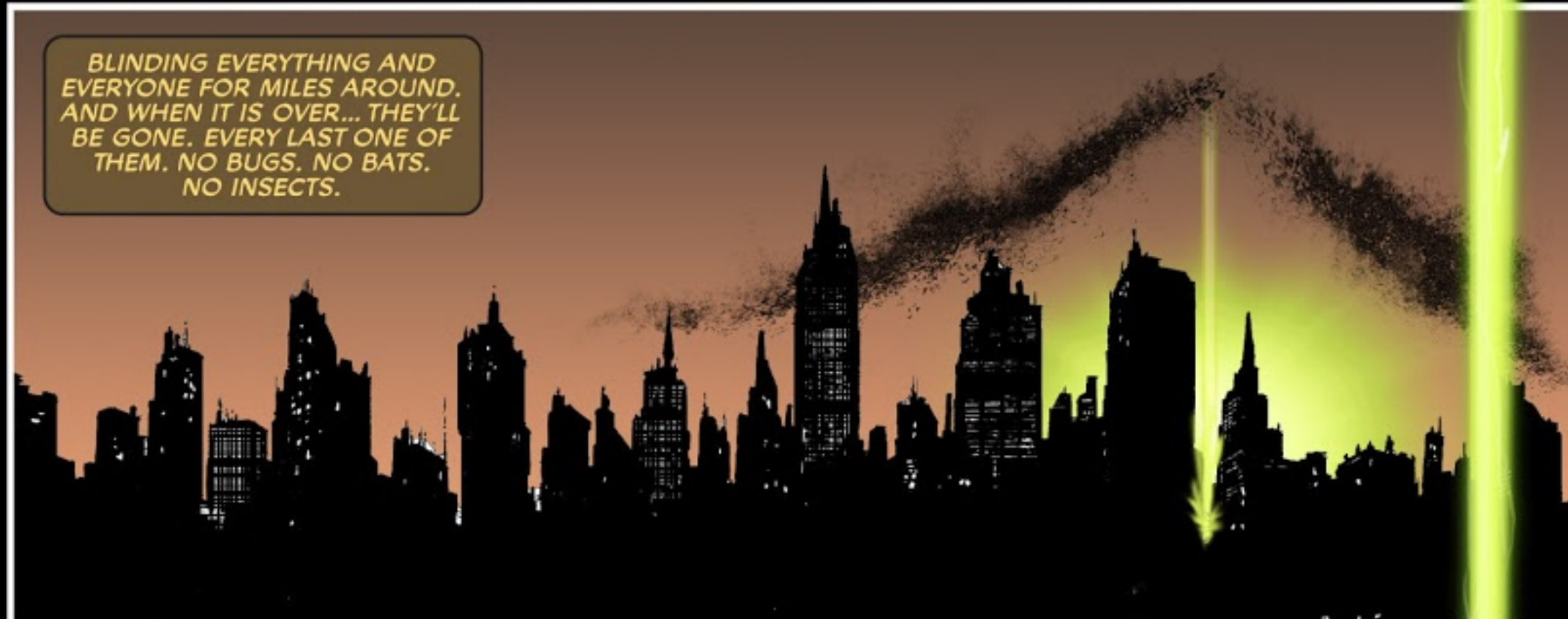




THEN IT
EXPLODES!



BLINDING EVERYTHING AND
EVERYONE FOR MILES AROUND.
AND WHEN IT IS OVER... THEY'LL
BE GONE. EVERY LAST ONE OF
THEM. NO BUGS. NO BATS.
NO INSECTS.



NO EVIL.





IT WILL BE AS IF THEY NEVER
EXISTED. AND TOMORROW,
NEW YORK CITY WILL WAKE
UP CLENSED. NORMAL.

REBORN.



NEXT MONTH: THE **TRIUMPHANT**
RETURN OF THE ORIGINAL SPAWN
AL SIMMONS IN
SPAWN RESURRECTION #1!

SPAWN



Jon Boy!
+ fco



HUMANS. EVERY DAY WE EXIST IS AN EXPERIMENT.



SOMETIMES THAT EXPERIMENT WORKS THE WAY IT WAS INTENDED.



OTHER TIMES, IT DEVIATES FROM THAT COURSE. BUT THROUGH IT ALL, 'THE STRONG SURVIVE.' AND THE STRONGER YOU ARE, THE BETTER CHANCE OF SURVIVAL.



THE THING IS, NO MATTER HOW BIG YOU MIGHT BE, OR HOW STRONG YOU ARE...

THERE'S ALWAYS SOMEONE STRONGER THAN YOU ARE.

AND IF THAT SOMEONE
DECIDES TO BECOME
YOUR ENEMY, BECAUSE
THEY THINK YOU HAVE
WRONGED THEM...TO
HUMILIATE THEM...THEY
WILL STOP AT NOTHING
TO PROVE THEY ARE
YOUR SUPERIOR ON
EVERY LEVEL.

YET THE STRONGEST CAN, AT TIMES, BE COWARDS.
CHOOSING INSTEAD TO TAKE THEIR EMOTIONS OUT ON
THE WEAKEST, MOST INNOCENT AROUND THEM. HOPING
THOSE ATTACKS WILL ENRAGE THEIR ACTUAL ENEMY.

SO IF A WOMAN... A WIFE NEEDS
TO PAY THE PRICE FOR HER
HUSBAND, SO BE IT! AND EVEN IF
THAT WOMAN WAS CARRYING AN
UNBORN CHILD AT THE TIME, IT
DOESN'T MATTER. THE ONLY
THING THAT DOES, IS GETTING THE
ATTENTION OF YOUR ENEMY.

BUT NOT EVERY ONE OF YOUR
ENEMIES COWER. THERE ARE SOME
WHO WILL RISE AND DEFY YOU, WHO
WILL FIGHT BACK TO HELP PROTECT
THEIR LOVED ONES WITH EVERY
OUNCE OF POWER THEY HAVE.
BECAUSE THE DAY THEY ALLOW
HARM TO THOSE THEY LOVE MOST...

...THEY KNOW WHAT
DAY THAT IS!



A
COLD day in
HELL



WHAT'RE YOU LOOKING AT OLD MAN? GET THE HELL OUT OF HERE... BEFORE YOU GET HURT.

THE OTHER DAY-- WERE ANY OF YOU INVOLVED WITH THAT RIOT?

YOU DEAF? I SAID YOU'D BETTER BE LEAVING, NOW.

WHEN I'M DONE, JUST LOOKING FOR A FEW ANSWERS.

WE DON'T TALK TO COPS.

NOT ASKING YOU TO. I WANT YOU TO TALK TO ME.

I HEARD THE RIOTS FLOODED TO THESE STREETS THE OTHER NIGHT? I WONDER IF YOU SAW A CAR?

DUDE, WE SAW LOTS OF CARS. POLICE CARS. GHOST CARS. PEOPLE WHO DON'T BELONG AROUND HERE DRIVING UP IN THEIR CARS. WE HAD A BUNCH OF THOSE PEOPLE--THE ONES THAT DON'T BELONG. YOU MIGHT OF HEARD, THEY SHOT A BOY, STRAIGHT IN THE BACK. KILLED HIM FOR DOING **NOTHING!**

WHY WOULD THEY DO THAT?

YOU TELL ME?! AFTER THAT CRAZY BUG INVASION... THE COPS AND MILITARY DIDN'T WANT TO LEAVE US ALONE. WE WERE JUST LETTING THEM KNOW WE WANTED OUR HOMES BACK. THEY DON'T GET TO TELL US WHERE WE GO AND WHERE TO LIVE.*

*See Issues 249 and 250-- Todd.



I'M NOT INTERESTED IN THAT.

A CAR WAS BURNT. IT HAD A WOMAN INSIDE. I'M LOOKING FOR THOSE THAT SET THE FIRE.



WHY WOULD WE SNITCH 'EM OUT TO YOU?

BECAUSE I'M GUESSING THERE WERE A FEW OF THOSE TYPES THAT DIDN'T BELONG HERE. AND I'M ALSO GUESSING WHAT THEY DID ONLY MADE THINGS WORSE AROUND HERE FOR YOU. FOR EVERYONE THAT LIVES HERE. SO WHY SHOULD YOU HAVE TO PAY THE PRICE TO THE COPS FOR THEIR ACTIONS.

YOU HELP ME AND I'LL MAKE SURE THAT GANG NEVER STEPS FOOT IN THESE STREETS AGAIN.

WHAT MAKES YOU SUCH A BADASS?



SAME THING THAT MAKES YOU ONE... ANGER. AT THOSE ALWAYS TRYING TO CONTROL WHAT WE DO.

CHECK DOWN THE STREET. NEAR JIMMY'S POOL HALL.



I SAW A FEW OF THEM STILL HANGING NEAR THERE. YOU WANT TO TAKE YOUR ANGER OUT ON THEM, BE MY GUEST.

'CAUSE MY BOY GOT SHOT AND THAT'S WHAT I'M CONCERNED ABOUT. HE WAS JUST WALKING HOME. MINDING HIS OWN BUSINESS. INSTEAD THEY POPPED HIM AND LEFT HIM BLEEDING IN THE STREETS LIKE AN ANIMAL. AND IF THEY DON'T WATCH OUT, WE GOIN' RIOT AGAIN. ONLY THIS TIME, THE COPS ARE GOING TO BE THE ONES WHO'RE AFRAID.



WE WANT EVERYONE OUT OF HERE. THE NEWS PEOPLE, THE DEMONSTRATORS THAT GOT BUSED IN. ALL OF THEM. YOU CAN EVEN TAKE THAT WHITE CRACKER AND HIS DOG WITH YOU.

HE DEFINITELY DON'T BELONG HERE.

WHAT...



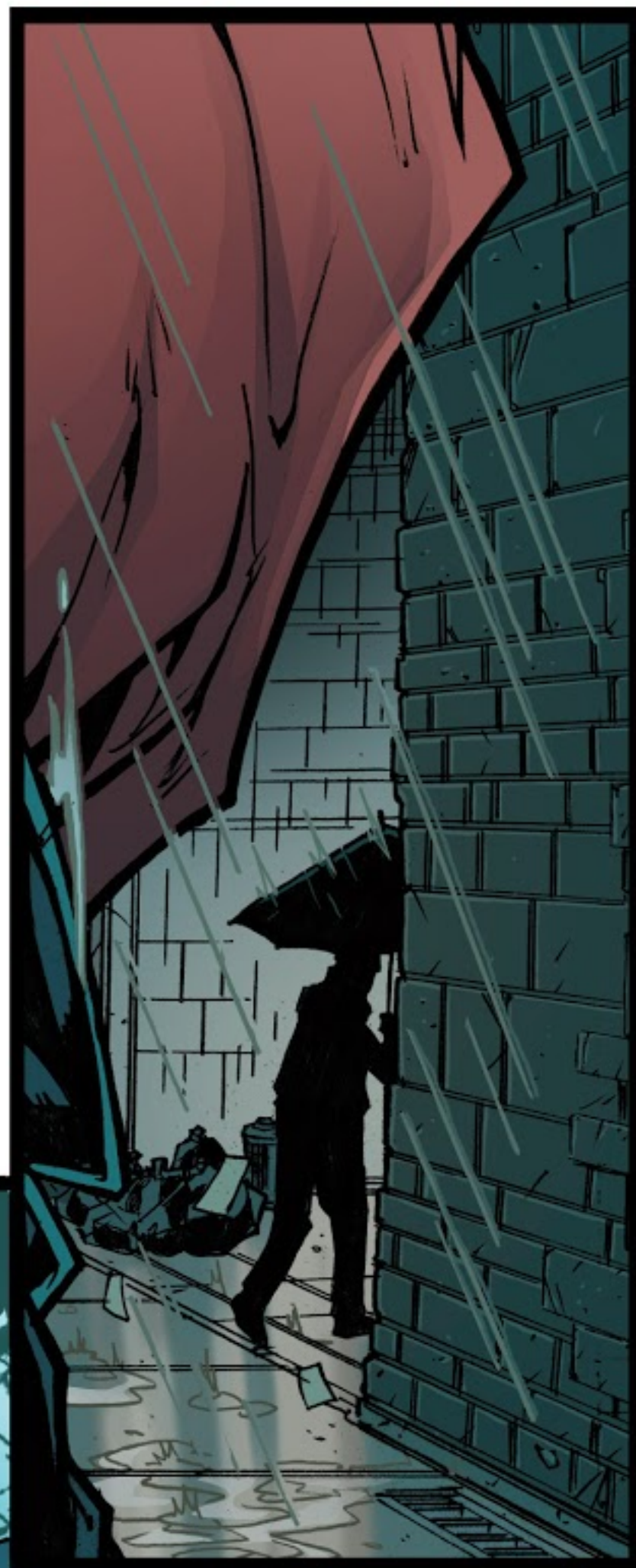
...the hell?



THE DOG. IT'S THE SAME ONE HE SAW IN THE 'BLACK.' THE SAME ONE THAT TOLD HIM WANDA WAS DEAD.

WHEN TOLD OF WANDA'S DEATH, A HUNDRED QUESTIONS RACED THROUGH AL'S MIND. BUT INSTEAD OF ASKING THEM, HE REMAINED SILENT. STOIC. BUT NOW, GIVEN TIME TO GET PAST HIS EMOTIONS, HE THINKS THIS COULD BE ANOTHER CHANCE TO ASK THEM.

WHETHER THOSE STALKING HIM WANT TO LISTEN OR NOT.



YOU...! STOP!

WHY ARE YOU FOLLOWING ME?



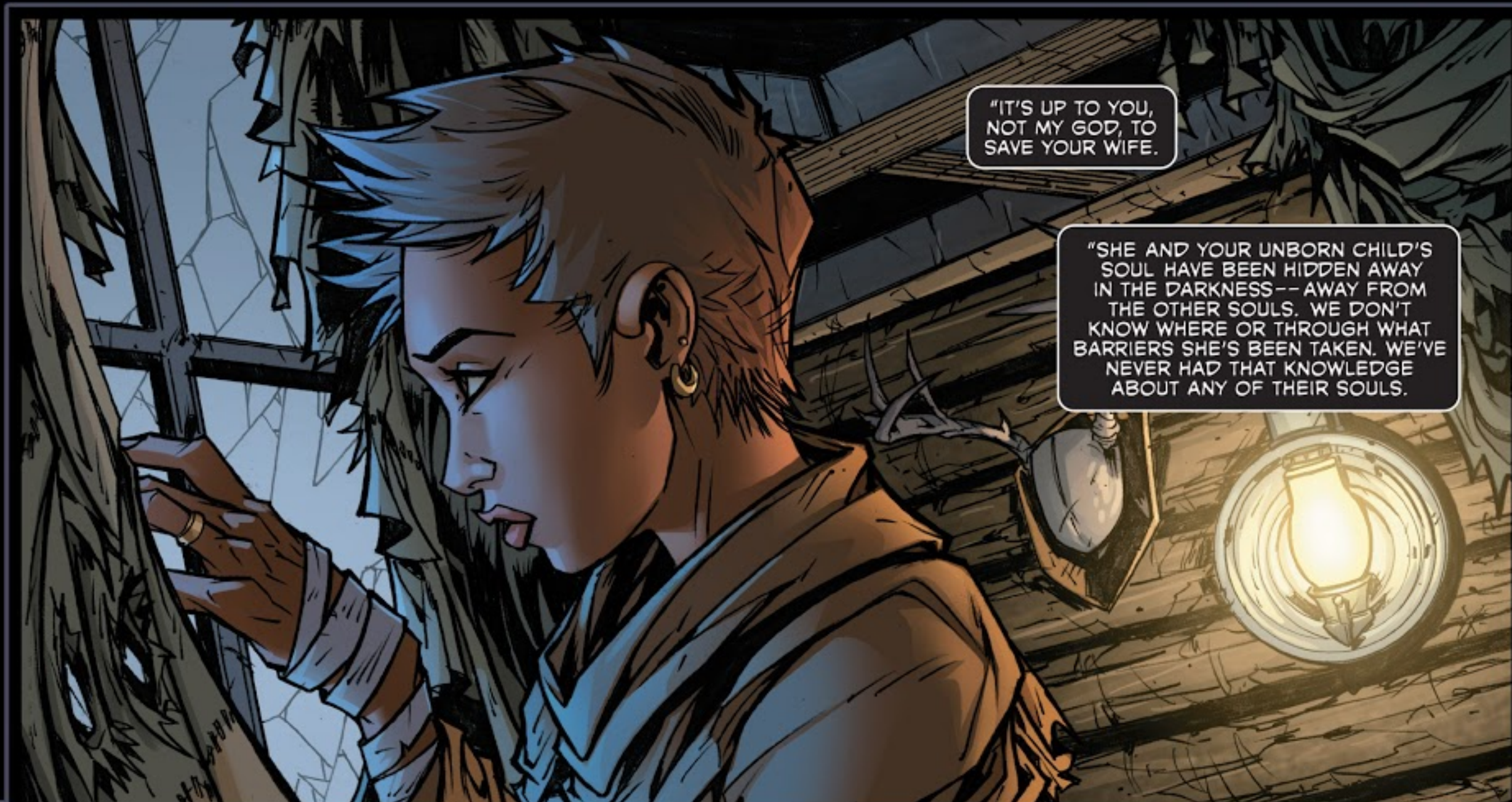
BECAUSE I'M SUPPOSED TO. YOU ALREADY KNOW THAT. SO, STOP PRETENDING YOU'RE SURPRISED. SHE TOLD YOU I'D BE COMING.

THAT YOU MIGHT NEED MY HELP.



"GOD SAID SHE WAS SAFE, BUT DIDN'T KNOW FOR HOW LONG. HEAVEN HAS SOME POWERS THAT STILL WORK IN HELL, BUT THEY DON'T LAST FOREVER. OVER TIME IT ERODES. WE WERE HOPING THAT WHEN SHE DIED, YOUR WIFE WOULD FALL TO OUR SIDE. SHE DIDN'T.

"AND GOD CAN'T INTERFERE. YOU WERE TOLD THAT!"



"IT'S UP TO YOU,
NOT MY GOD, TO
SAVE YOUR WIFE.

"SHE AND YOUR UNBORN CHILD'S
SOUL HAVE BEEN HIDDEN AWAY
IN THE DARKNESS-- AWAY FROM
THE OTHER SOULS. WE DON'T
KNOW WHERE OR THROUGH WHAT
BARRIERS SHE'S BEEN TAKEN. WE'VE
NEVER HAD THAT KNOWLEDGE
ABOUT ANY OF THEIR SOULS.



"BUT WE DO KNOW THAT WHEN GOD
ANOINTS A PERSON BEFORE THEY DIE,
THEIR SOUL CAN BE PROTECTED, FOR A
TIME, FROM HELL'S SADISTIC TORTURE.



"YOUR WIFE WAS ONE OF
THOSE FEW GOD ANOINTED
BECAUSE HEAVEN KNEW
THAT THERE WOULD COME A
DAY WHEN ONE OF HELL'S
VERY OWN WOULD RISE
AGAINST SATAN HIMSELF.



"AND THE BEST WAY TO BE
ABLE TO EMPOWER THAT
PERSON WOULD BE TO
PROTECT THAT PERSON'S
LOVED ONES FOR AS LONG
AS POSSIBLE.



"NOT ONLY TO
PROTECT THE SOULS
OF THOSE WHO
ONCE LIVED..."



"BUT ALSO TO PROTECT THE SOULS
OF THOSE INNOCENT LIVES WHO
NEVER WERE GIVEN THE CHANCE
TO LIVE IN THE FIRST PLACE."



"SO, IF YOU WANT TO HELP
YOUR WIFE, THEN I'D SUGGEST
YOU STOP WASTING YOUR TIME
WITH ME AND START MOVING
IN THAT DIRECTION."



"YOUR WIFE'S EXISTENCE..."



"...AND YOUR UNBORN
CHILD'S, DEPEND ON
YOUR NEXT MOVE."





DO WHATEVER
YOU HAVE TO DO
BY YOURSELF. DO
EVERYTHING FOR
ALL I CARE. MY JOB
IS TO BE NEARBY IN
CASE YOU CHANGE
YOUR MIND.

YOU
MIGHT NOT
LIKE IT.

BUT
I FOLLOW
GOD'S
ORDERS, NOT
YOURS.



HER? NO.
SHE'S JUST A
STRAY I PICKED UP,
WANDERING THE
STREETS. BUT THERE IS
SOMETHING I NEED TO
GIVE YOU BEFORE
I GO...

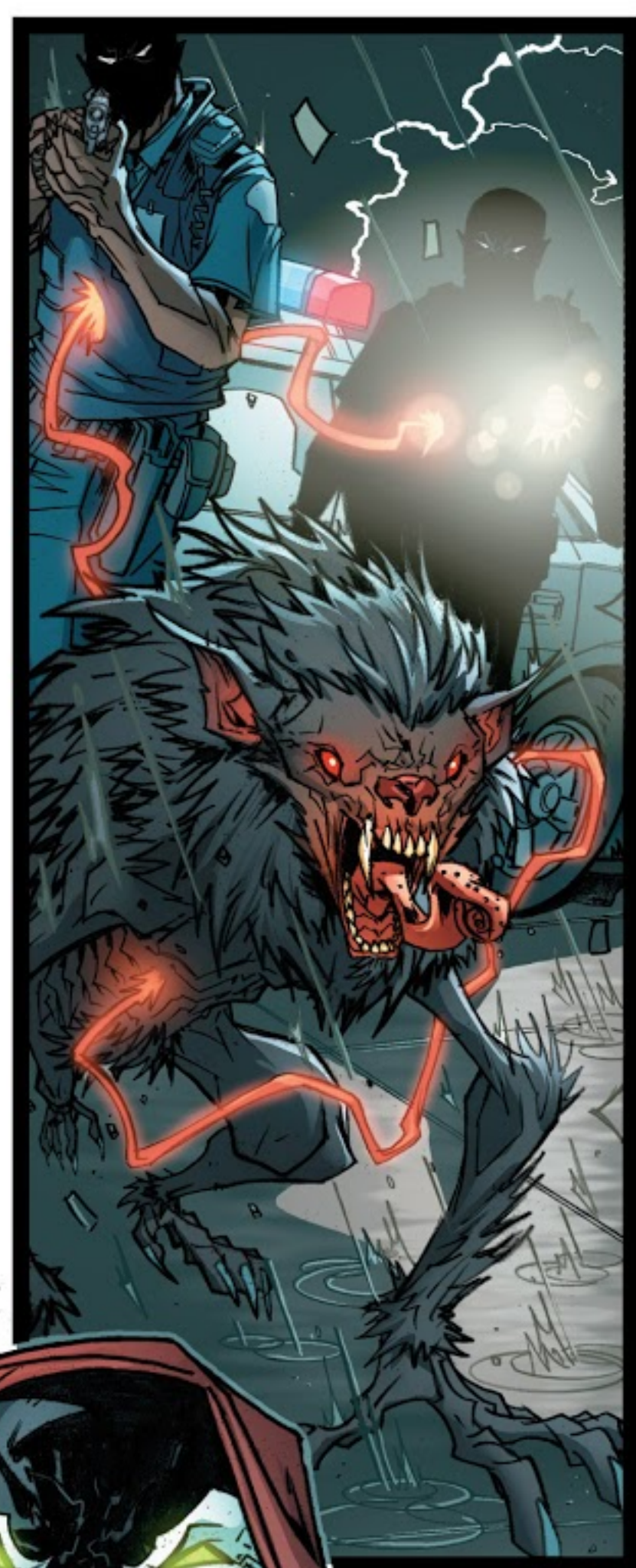
AND
YOUR
DOG IS
GOD?



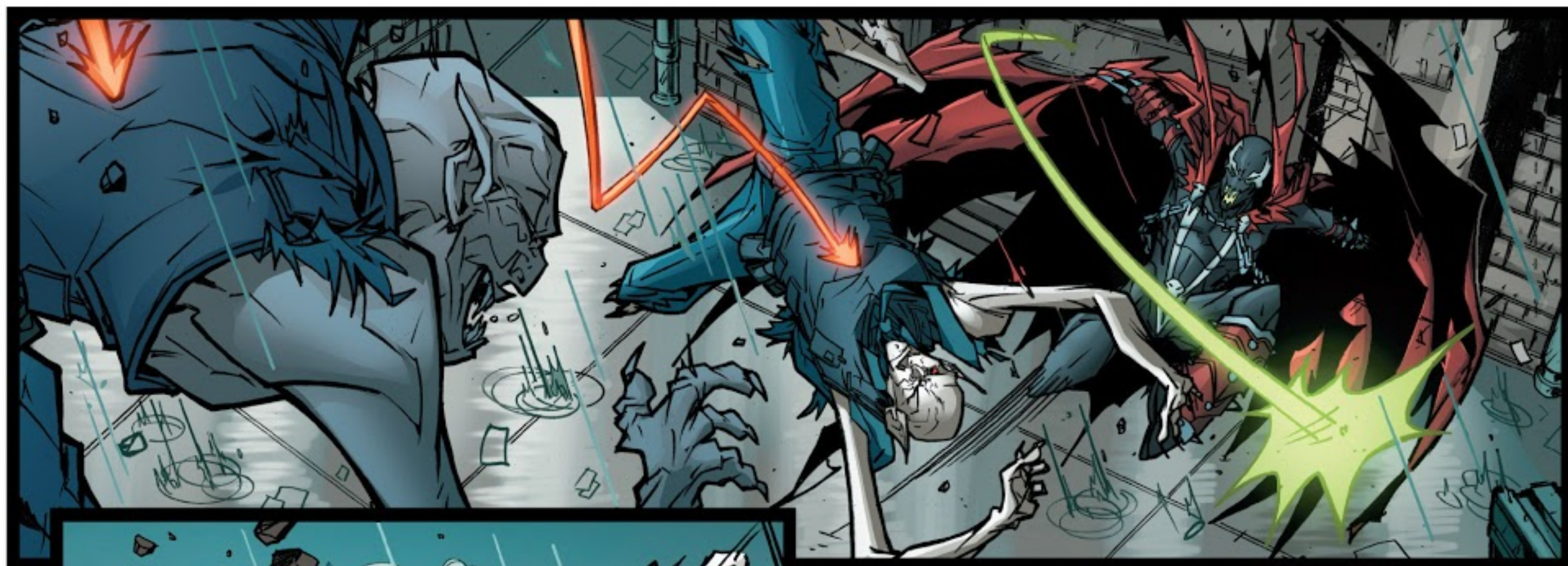
IT'S A LITTLE
FINANCIAL
HELP AND SOME
OTHER CONTACTS
IN CASE YOU
AND I GET
SEPARATED.

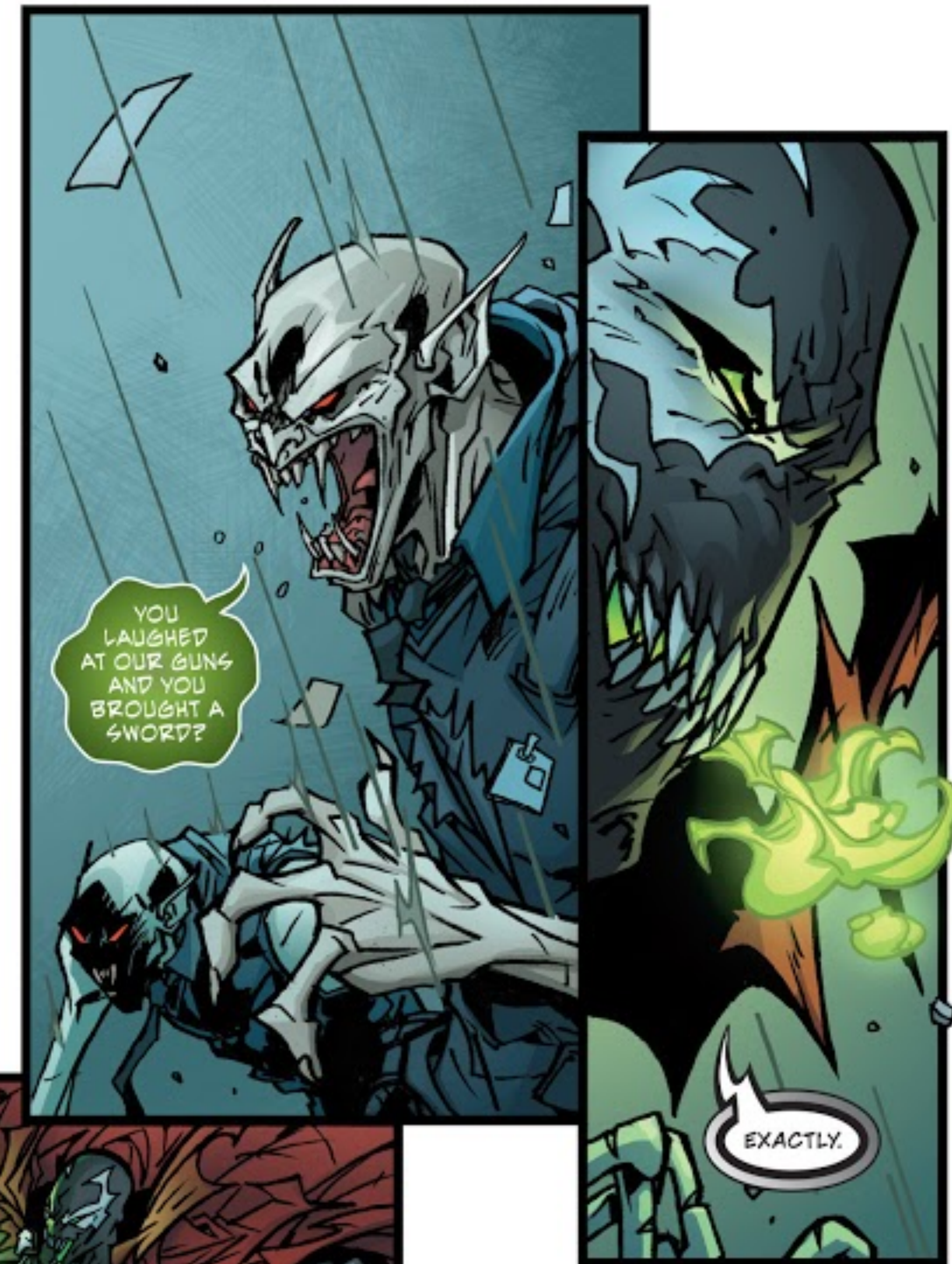


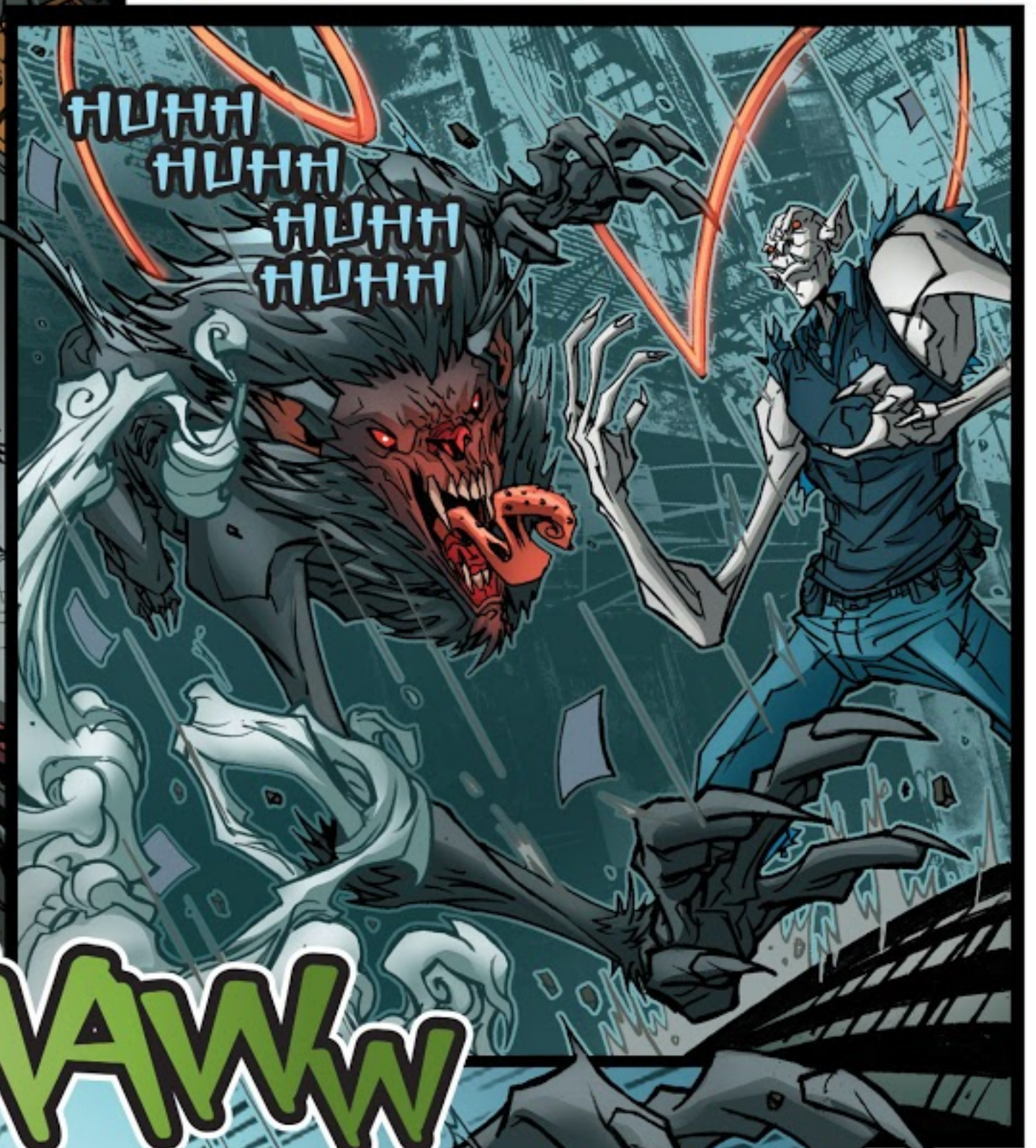
FREEZE
RIGHT THERE,
ASSHOLES!

















An hour later.





I DIDN'T. JUST WANTED TO SEE WHAT I'M UP AGAINST. YOU SAID THERE WERE OTHERS LIKE YOU?

THERE ARE.



AND WHAT EXACTLY ARE YOU?

WE'RE 'MESSENGERS.' SOME OF US STRICTLY OBSERVE. OTHERS OF US ARE ALLOWED TO INTERACT.

INTERACT WITH WHAT?

WITH HUMANS.



SO YOU'RE SOME KIND OF F*CKING ANGEL? IS THAT IT?

NO. I'M HUMAN. JUST NOT THE NORMAL KIND. I'LL TELL YOU ABOUT HOW IT ALL WORKS ANOTHER DAY. BUT I'M GUESSING THAT'S NOT WHY YOU'RE HERE?



YOU SAID YOU WANTED TO HELP.

I DO.

THEN TELL ME--YOU EVER HEARD OF THE NAME 'BELIAL?'



WHO TOLD YOU THAT NAME?

THAT'S NOT WHAT I'M ASKING. AND FROM YOUR RESPONSE, IT SOUNDS LIKE YOU'VE HEARD OF HIM.

I HAVE. HE... USED TO BE ONE OF US. ONE OF GOD'S CHOSEN. WE ALL THOUGHT HE'D BE A LEADER SOMEDAY. THAT HE'D ASCEND TO THE THRONE AT SOME POINT, BUT HE DIDN'T. HE LET HIS OWN HUBRIS GET THE BETTER OF HIM. ALWAYS THINKING HE WAS BETTER... THAT THE REST OF US WERE BENEATH HIM. OR AT LEAST INFERIOR TO HIM. AND FOR A WHILE, GOD LIKED THAT TRAIT IN HIM.

SHE ALWAYS TOLD US, "WAR'S HARD WORK AND THERE ARE TIMES WHEN YOU NEED TO THINK YOU'RE BETTER THAN EVERYONE ELSE." BECAUSE WHEN HELL CRASHES OUR GATES, SELF-CONFIDENCE MIGHT BE THE ONLY THING THAT KEEPS US ALIVE.



MOST OF US UNDERSTOOD WHAT THAT MEANT. BUT BELIAL TOOK IT TO AN EXTREME. BECOMING SO SELF-ABSORBED WITH HIMSELF, HE WAS BLINDED TO THE DESTRUCTION HE WAS DOING TO THE CHEMISTRY OF OUR BATTALION. EVENTUALLY HE NEEDED TO BE DEALT WITH.

HE DIDN'T TAKE HIS PUNISHMENT VERY WELL.



SO HE JUMPED TO THE OTHER SIDE, THINKING HE'D SHOW HEAVEN IT WAS WRONG. HE SHOULD HAVE BEEN A LEADER--THE ONE GOD LOOKED TO. HE ALSO SWORE HIS REVENGE ON ALL OF US AT SOME TIME. HE WAS GOING TO MAKE ANYONE HE THOUGHT HAD HUMILIATED HIM, REGRET THEIR ACTIONS.



WHAT'S THAT GOT TO DO WITH ME?

BELIAL KNEW GOD HAD AN EYE ON YOUR SOUL. MY GUESS IS HE JUST WANTED TO SEND A MESSAGE TO GOD BY MESSING WITH YOUR HEAD. SO HE THOUGHT...

HE KILLED MY WIFE TO **DISTRACT** ME...? IS THAT WHAT YOU'RE TELLING ME?

SORT OF. WANDA WAS JUST COLLATERAL DAMAGE FROM HIS ANGER AT GOD.

I'M SORRY.

YOUR WIFE'S DEATH WAS THE RESULT OF SOMEONE HATING SOMEONE ELSE. YOU WERE JUST WHITE NOISE TO HIM.



AND BECAUSE OF WHAT HE DID, I TOLD GOD I'D VOLUNTEERED TO HELP STOP HIM. TO DO THAT I MADE SOME DIFFICULT DECISIONS.

YOU TOLD ME YOU WERE MORTAL.

I AM. BUT NOT THE WAY YOU THINK. TO HELP I HAD TO GIVE UP SOMETHING. SOMETHING VERY IMPORTANT TO ME. I'M SURPRISED YOU CAN'T SEE IT. IT'S IN THE MIRROR.

WHAT?... WHAT DID YOU GIVE UP?



EVERYTHING!

I HAD TO
GIVE UP
EVERYTHING
I EVER WAS.





image

252

DIGITAL
EDITION

THE
NEW
252!

SPAWN®



John Bly
+ fco



SHKKE
NNAAA--



AAAAAH!

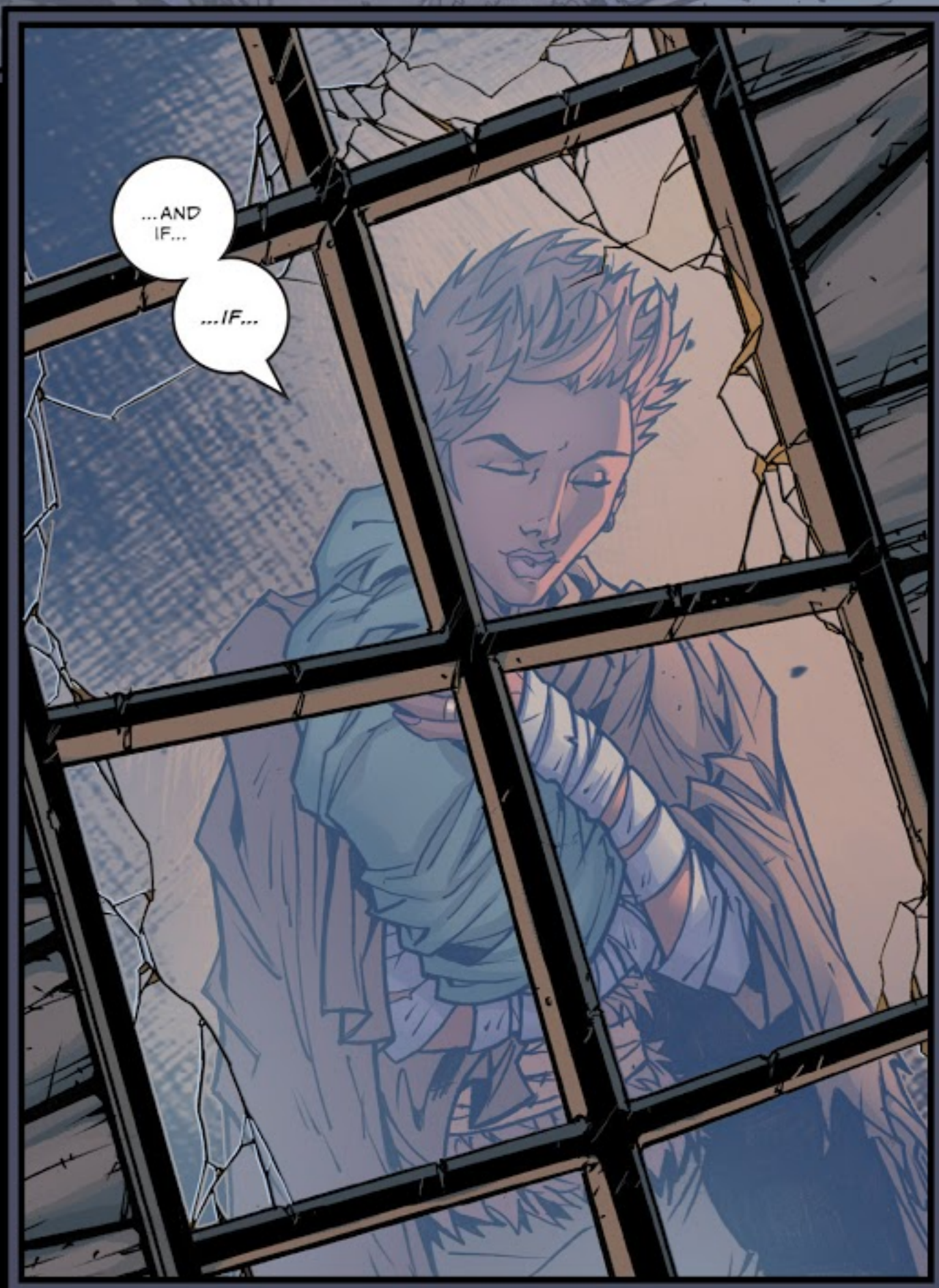


Shit.



"AND IF THAT
MOCKINGBIRD
DON'T SING,
PAPA'S GONNA
BUY YOU A
DIAMOND RING.

"AND IF THAT DIAMOND
RING TURNS TO BRASS,
PAPA'S GONNA BUY YOU
A LOOKING GLASS."



...AND
IF...

...IF...



THERE, THERE.
HUSH NOW, BABY.
I NEVER COULD
REMEMBER ALL
THE WORDS TO
THAT SONG.



DADDY
WILL SING
THEM TO
YOU. WHEN
HE GETS
HOME.



THE
WOLVES
ARE ON
THE MOVE
AGAIN.

I HOPE
DADDY CAN
SEE WHERE
HE'S GOING. IT'S
BECOME SO
DARK OUT
THERE---



KNOK

KNOK

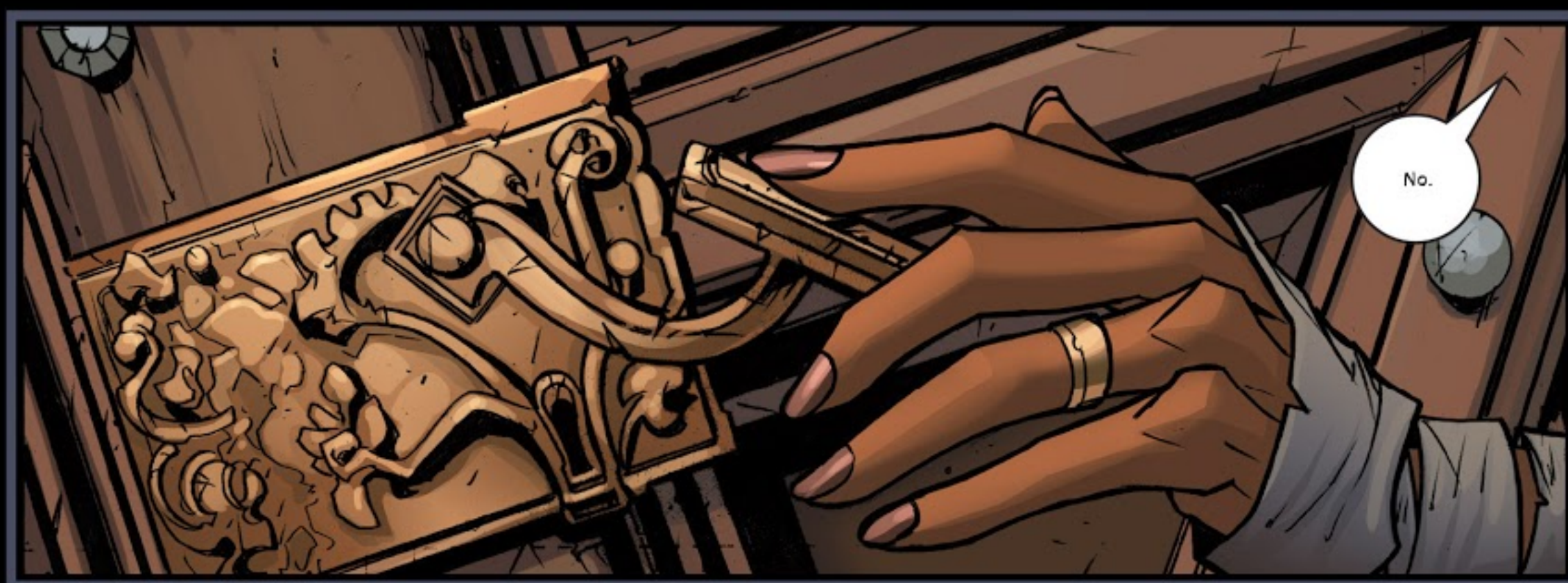


HELLO?
IS SOMEONE
THERE?

I'M A FRIEND
OF YOUR HUSBAND.
HE ASKED ME TO
VISIT YOU. HE'S VERY
CONCERNED.

YOU
KNOW MY
HUSBAND?

YES.
WE'RE
FRIENDS.



No.



HOW DO YOU KNOW HIM?

I TOLD YOU. WE'RE FRIENDS.

WHAT'S HIS NAME?



WHO?

MY HUSBAND. WHAT'S HIS NAME?

AL. AL SIMMONS.



AND WHAT'S MY NAME?



**BAM
BAM**

YOU'RE DEAD, DO YOU UNDERSTAND THAT? YOU BURNED ALIVE!



**BAM
BANG
BANG**

YOUR EJACULATE CHILD WAS NEVER BORN! YOU'RE IN HELL!



YOU'RE GOING TO HAVE TO WAIT FOR MY HUSBAND.



BAM









I THOUGHT WE WERE SUPPOSED TO BE INCONSPICUOUS.



I'M STILL GETTING UP TO SPEED ON BEING MORTAL. NOW LET'S SEE...

...OKAY, HERE WE GO: "STAY ON PATH... YADDA YADDA... UNHOLY TRINITY... ETCETERA, ETCETERA..."

THERE'S SUPPOSED TO BE A MESSAGE FOR YOU.

THIS IS HOW YOU TWO COMMUNICATE? VIA EMAIL?



DON'T WORRY. IT'S ENCRYPTED.

GOOD FOR YOU.



I'M SORRY. GOD CAN BE VERY INEFFABLE AT TIMES. AH! HERE IT IS. OKAY. WE HAVE OUR FIRST COMMUNIQUE.



LET'S SEE NOW...

oh.



WHAT IS IT? WHAT'S WRONG?

NOTHING.





"IT CAME UP-- ABOUT TEN MINUTES AGO. WE WERE PUSHING META-DATA ACROSS SOME OLD FILES. MIGHT JUST BE A GLITCH IN THE SOFTWARE."

WHAT KIND OF GLITCH?

NOT SURE... FACIAL RECOGNITION SOFTWARE'S HIT AND MISS SOMETIMES, LIKE DIGITAL VOICE TRANSLATION. MAYBE IT'S NOTHING.



WE WERE RUNNING SCANS OF THE SURVEILLANCE TAPES FROM THOSE EAST SIDE RIOTS-- WHERE THAT KID GOT SHOT IN THE BACK.

FIGURED IF ANY DOMESTIC TARGETS GOT DUMB ENOUGH TO SHOW UP ON THE STREETS AFTERWARDS, WE'D CATCH THEM IN THE ACT. LOOKS LIKE WE GOT A HIT.

SOFTWARE THINKS IT RECOGNIZES *THIS* GUY. HE'S ONE OF OURS... AT LEAST HE *USED TO BE*.



AL SIMMONS: DECEASED.



WELL, NOW.

524-51-8044
SIMMONS,
Albert T.





WHO'S IN HERE?
WHO!?

HAAHHH...
SHEHHÉ... HEARD
YOU COMING MILES
AWAY, HELLSPAWN. YOU
MAKE A LOT OF NOISE.
SOME PROMINENT
PEOPLE ARE VERY
ANGRY YOU CAME
BACK.

COME.
TAKE A SEAT.
MUCH TO
DISCUSS.



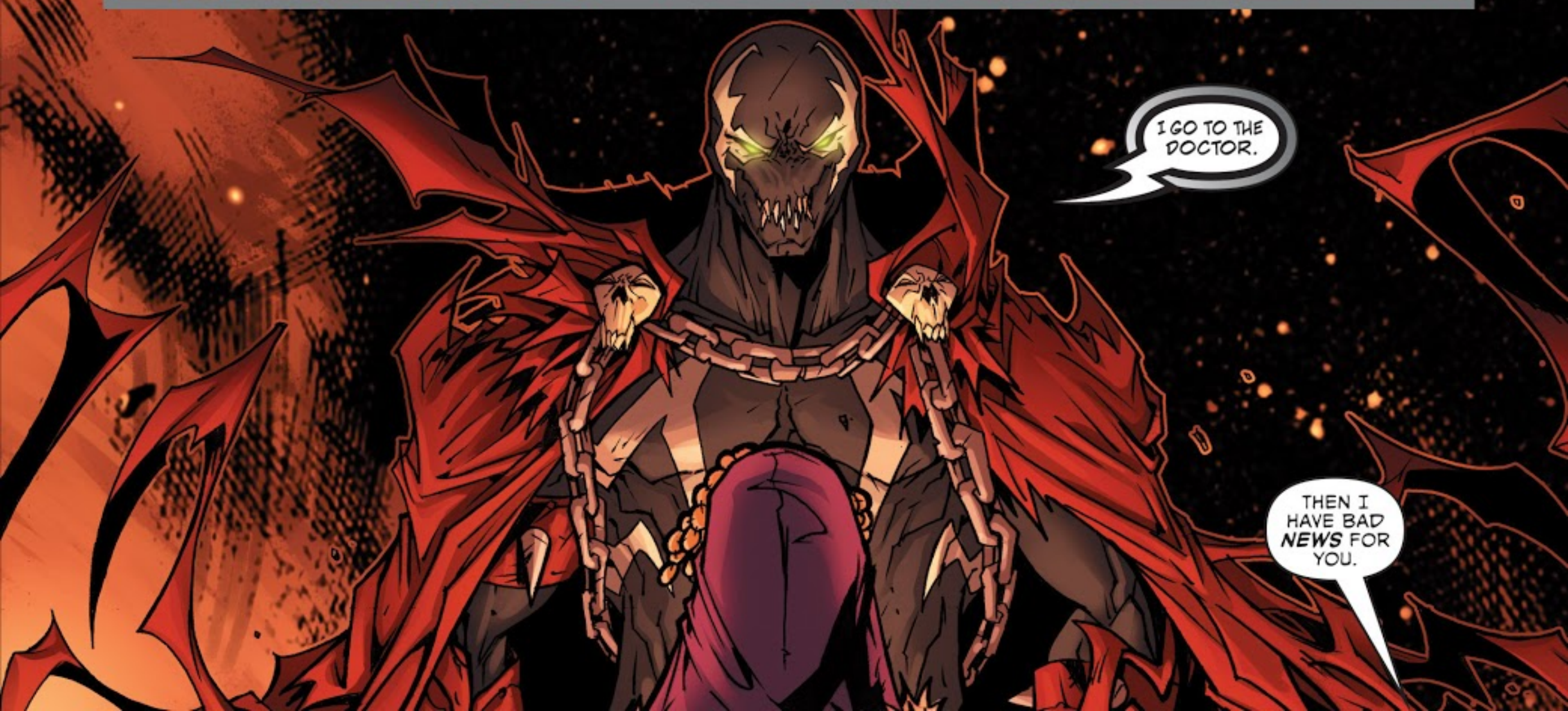
I'VE SEEN
YOU
BEFORE...?

MAYBE.



HAVE
A QUESTION
FOR YOU. IT'S
A QUESTION OF
INTENT.

YOU THINK
YOU HAVE
CANCER. DO YOU
GO TO THE DOCTOR
TO FIND OUT FOR
SURE? OR DO YOU
STAY AWAY AND LIVE
IN FEAR OF THE
ANSWER?



I GO TO THE
DOCTOR.

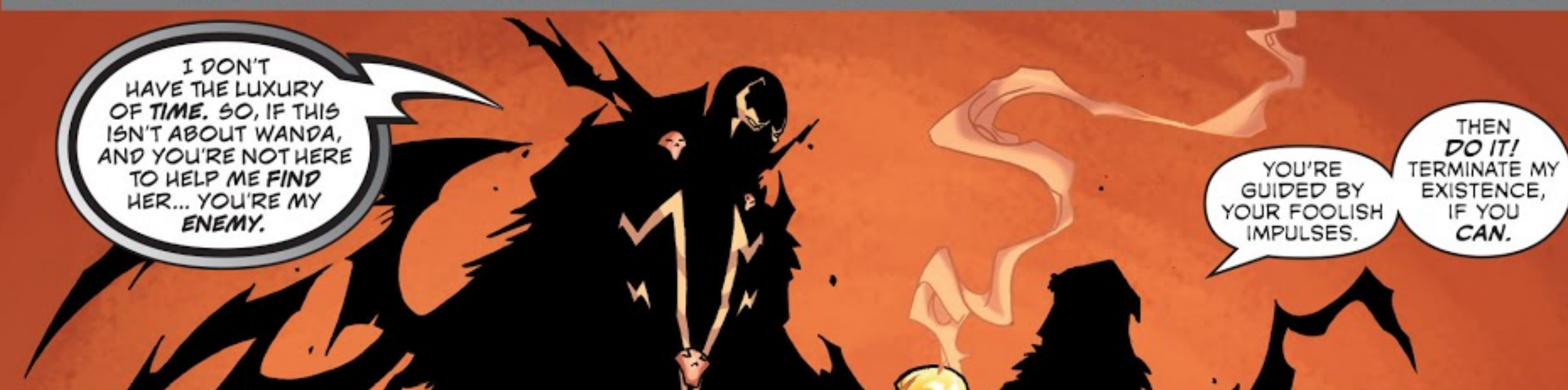
THEN I
HAVE BAD
NEWS FOR
YOU.



MMH...

KILLED
A LOT OF
PEOPLE IN THE
NAME OF YOUR
COUNTRY. BACK
WHEN YOU
LIVED.

MISGUIDED.
A TYPICAL
AMERICAN
JINGOIST.



I DON'T
HAVE THE LUXURY
OF TIME. SO, IF THIS
ISN'T ABOUT WANDA,
AND YOU'RE NOT HERE
TO HELP ME FIND
HER... YOU'RE MY
ENEMY.

YOU'RE
GUIDED BY
YOUR FOOLISH
IMPULSES.

THEN
DO IT!
TERMINATE MY
EXISTENCE,
IF YOU
CAN.



ENOUGH!
WHERE'S MY
WIFE AND THE
CHILD? SOMEONE
KNOWS WHERE
THEY'RE AT!

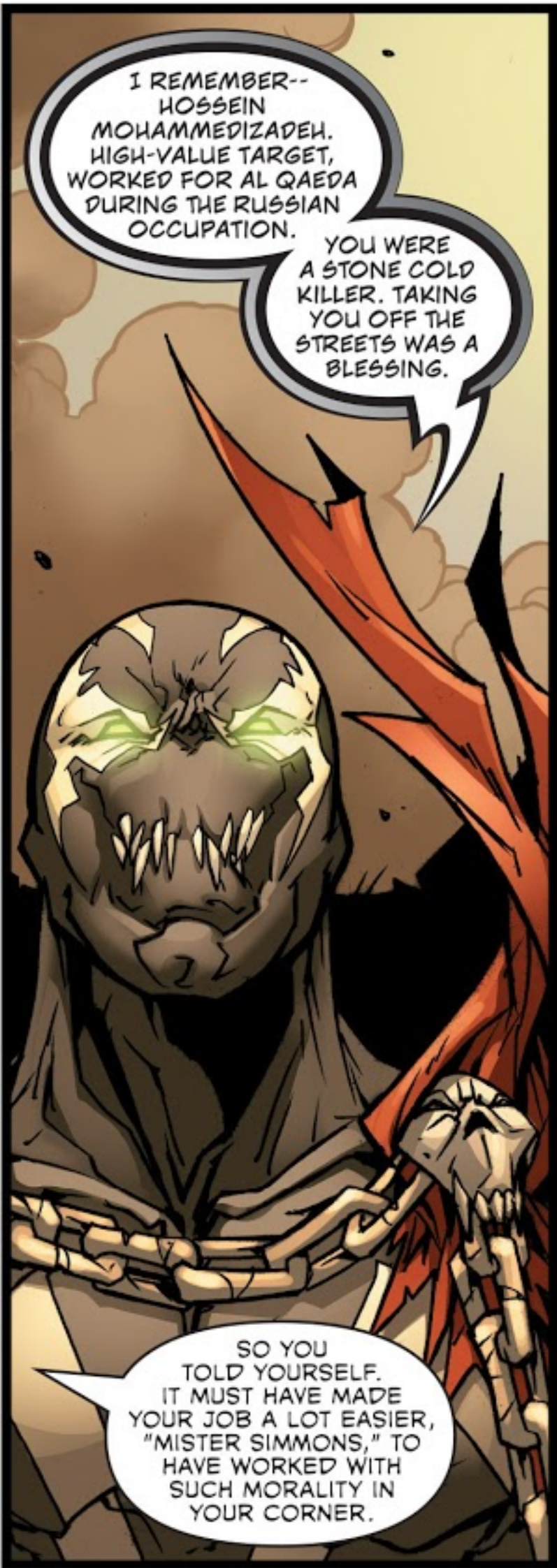


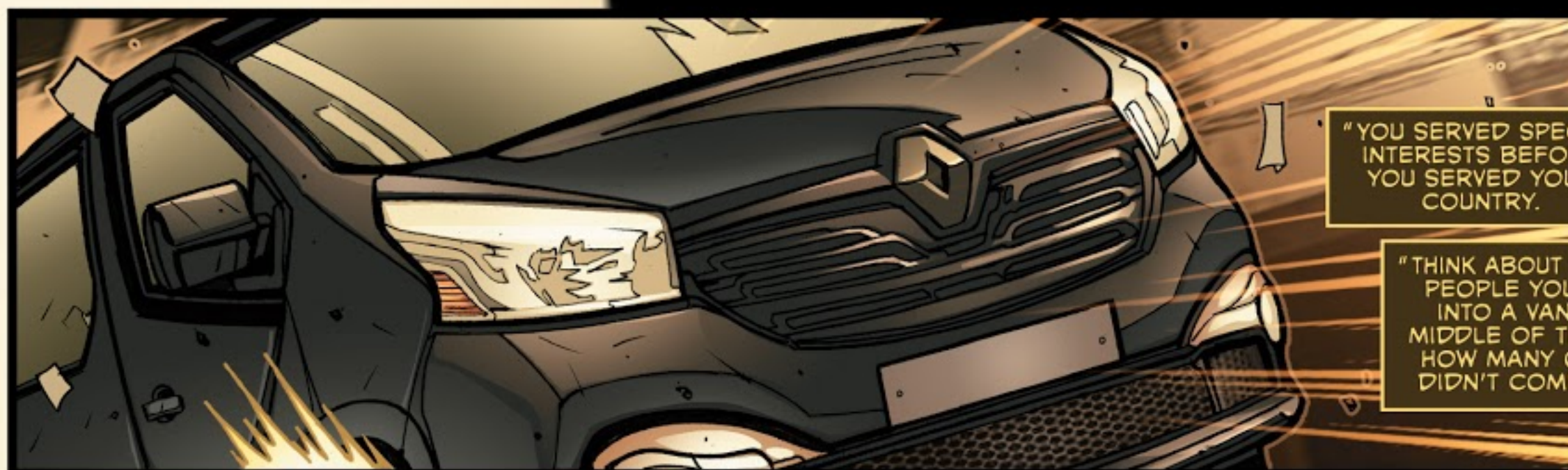
YOU **DREAMT**
LAST NIGHT,
DIDN'T YOU,
HELLSPAWN?



WHAT...









YOU HAD QUITE A THING GOING FOR YOURSELF, "MISTER SIMMONS." THE ONLY PEOPLE YOU AND YOUR COHORT ANSWERED TO WERE BEING BEATEN TO A BLOODY PULP IN A CHAIR.

I RAN A FRUIT AND VEGETABLE STALL IN THAT MARKETPLACE, BUT YOU NEEDED A SCAPEGOAT FOR THE ATTACK, AND SO YOU CHOSE ME.

YOU KEEP TELLING YOURSELF THAT, SUITSAG... SHUK... IT WON'T ALTER THE FACT YOU SET THAT BOMB OFF AND KILLED TWENTY-FIVE PEOPLE.



THE ARGUMENT ISN'T WITH ME, MY FRIEND. IT'S WITH YOUR OWN CONSCIENCE. YOU AND YOUR CIA ASSOCIATES ALWAYS SUSPECTED THE REAL TRUTH.



THAT MAN WHO SET OFF THAT BOMB WAS YOUR OWN INTERPRETER.



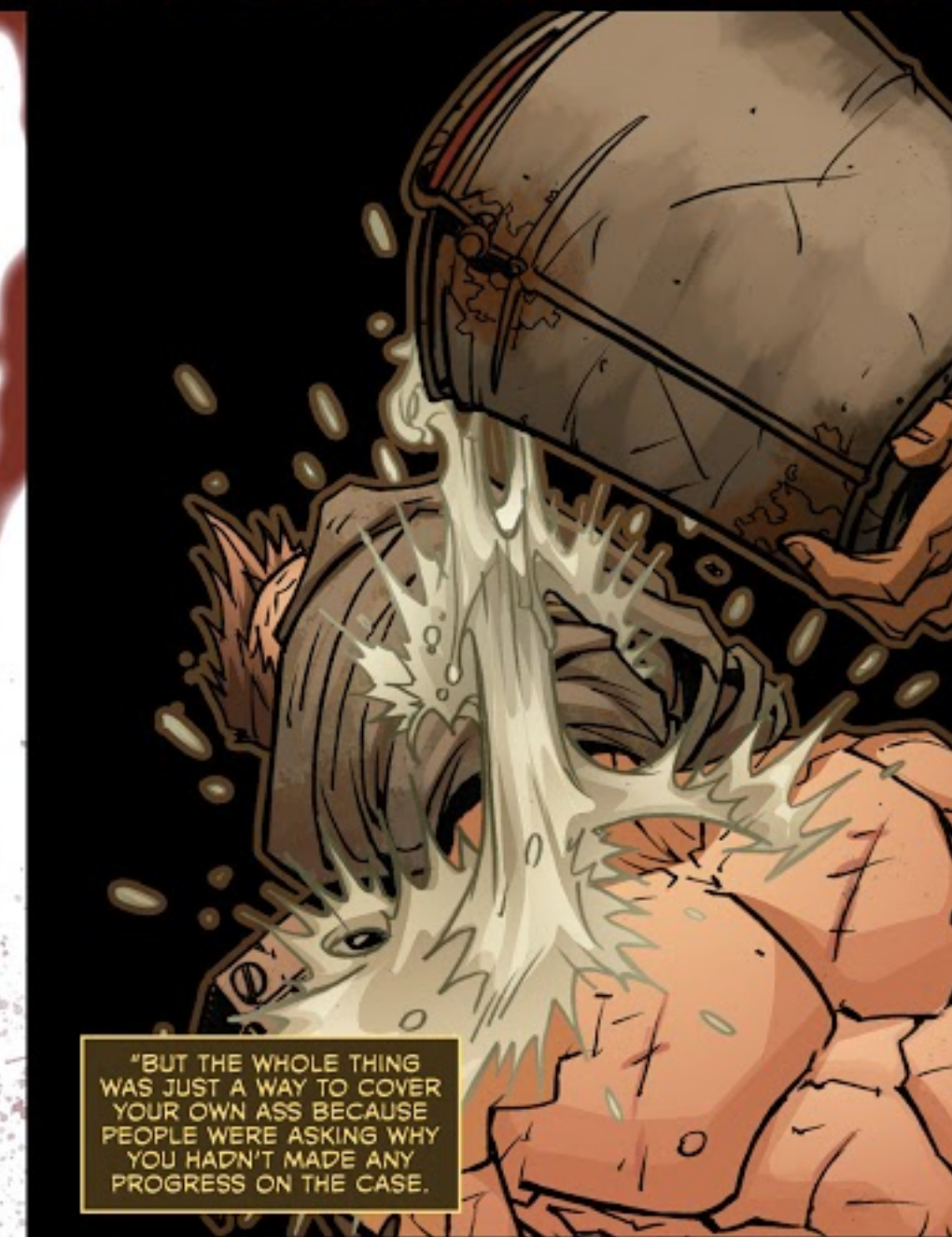
"THE SOMALI POLICE NEEDED A SCAPEGOAT FOR ONE OF THEIR F*CK-UPS. YOU HANDED HIM OVER AS A SUSPECT IN A DRUG DEAL, EVEN THOUGH YOU KNEW THEY'D TAKE HIM A HUNDRED YARDS DOWN THE ROAD AND SHOOT HIM IN THE HEAD.

"JUST LIKE YOU KNEW ABOUT YOUR OWN CIA SECRETARY, KENDRA BOOTHE. BRASS SAID SHE WAS HANDING SECRETS TO THE RUSSIANS.



"BUT EVERYONE KNEW SHE WAS SUCKING A SENATOR'S DICK AND HE SIMPLY WANTED HER OUT OF THE WAY.

"THE BOSNIAN, BAJRAMOVIC... YOU PRETENDED HE WAS CONNECTED TO HUMAN TRAFFICKING THROUGH EASTERN EUROPE. HE SWALLOWED HALF AN OCEAN IN THAT INTERROGATION ROOM BEFORE HIS HEART GAVE OUT.



"BUT THE WHOLE THING WAS JUST A WAY TO COVER YOUR OWN ASS BECAUSE PEOPLE WERE ASKING WHY YOU HADN'T MADE ANY PROGRESS ON THE CASE.



"CORPORAL TRAVIS JOHNSON---ONE OF YOUR OWN. YOU KNEW THOSE CHARGES OF SELLING DATA TO THE CHINESE WERE BOGUS.

"BUT SOMEONE NEEDED TO FILL THE QUOTA. EVEN SOMEONE WHO LATER HUNG HIMSELF IN HIS OWN CELL WITH A BELT THAT YOU "FORGOT" TO REMOVE FROM HIS WAISTBAND."



THOSE INNOCENT PEOPLE ARE NOT THE WHOLE STORY.

THERE'S MORE.

DO YOU REMEMBER ME?



I REMEMBER. YOU'RE THAT COLOMBIAN GRAND-MOTHER.

AND I WAS FOLLOWING ORDERS. SO, IF IT'S GUILT YOU'RE LOOKING FOR, YOU'RE WASTING YOUR BREATH.



DON'T EVEN RECOGNIZE HOW YOU CARRY YOUR OWN GUILT. BUT *I* DO.



YOU AND YOUR PEOPLE WANTED MY GRAND-SON BECAUSE HE WAS TIED TO THE CARTEL. BUT I WASN'T.

BUT THAT DIDN'T MATTER *DID IT?* YOU TOOK ME TO THAT BARN ANYWAY. AND FOR TWO DAYS YOU WATCHED AS YOUR ASSOCIATE, CUTTER, TORTURED ME FOR INFORMATION YOU KNEW I NEVER HAD.





YOU'RE
NO
DEMON.
YOU...



NOT ONE
OF HELL'S, NO.
I'M ONE OF
YOURS.

BOUND TO
YOU WHETHER
YOU ACCEPT IT
OR NOT.



AND YOU
CARRY US WITH
YOU WHEREVER
YOU GO. IN
SUCH A WAY YOU
CANNOT
FATHOM.



I WAS
A CARPENTER.
I DID NOTHING
TO DESERVE BEING
MURDERED. AND MY
FAMILY-- YOU TOOK ME
FROM THEM. YOU ACT
LIKE A CHILD BECAUSE
YOU WANT A CHANCE
TO BE WITH YOUR
FAMILY AGAIN?



WHEN DID
I EVER HAVE THAT
CHANCE--?



I DIED
BECAUSE
OF YOUR
SINS.

I WAS A
SIMPLE
MERCHANT.



I CAN'T
ESCAPE YOUR
GUILT.

YOU
BETRAYED
ONE OF YOUR
OWN.



WE'RE ALL
BOUND TO
YOU!

ALL THE
PEOPLE I
KILLED, THEY...
THEY'RE MY
GUILT.



MALEBOLGIA SENDS HIS REGARDS. WONDERS WHY YOU NEVER PUT TWO AND TWO TOGETHER BEFORE NOW.

HE REQUISITIONED OUR SOULS WHEN WE DIED. HARVESTED THEM. KNOWING THAT WE WOULD BE BOUND TO YOU FOREVER.



I FOLLOWED MY ORDERS!



BUT SECRETLY YOU RELISHED EVERY SINGLE ONE.

WHEN YOU WENT LOOKING FOR MY GRANDSON I HID IN MY HOUSE FOR A WEEK. FEARING YOU MIGHT COME BACK. AND WHEN YOU DIDN'T, SOMEHOW THAT MADE IT WORSE.



DAYS LATER MY GRANDSON WENT MISSING. AFTER THAT I HAD NOTHING LEFT TO LIVE FOR. SO I WENT BACK INTO THAT BARN AND PUT HIS PISTOL TO MY HEAD.



BLAM



OH, GOD...





"COULD IT BE A FALSE POSITIVE?"



NOW THERE'S A NAME I HAVEN'T HEARD IN TEN YEARS.





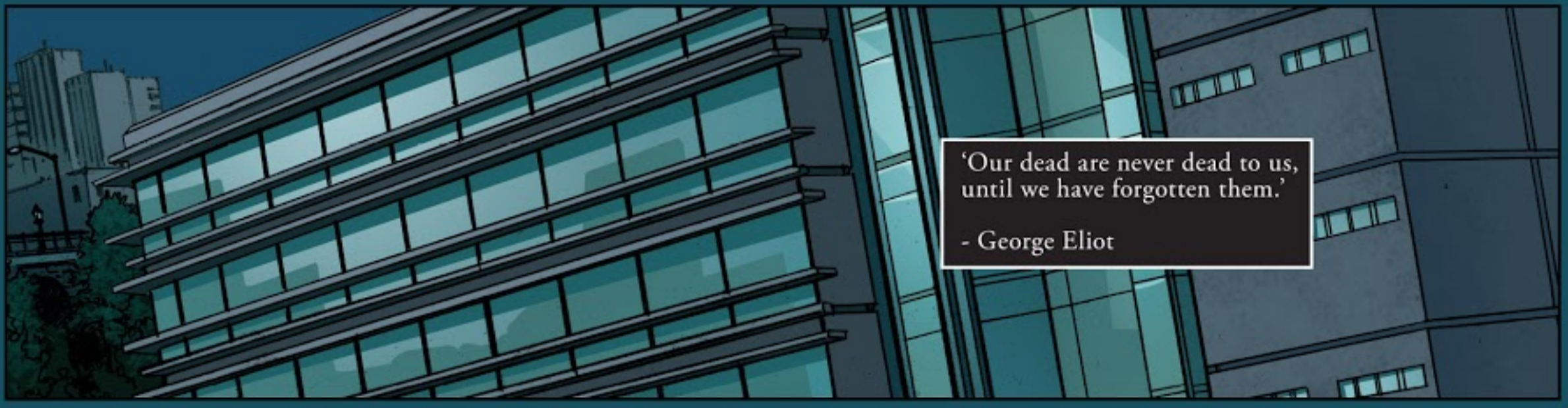
image

253

DIGITAL
EDITION

SPAWN





'Our dead are never dead to us,
until we have forgotten them.'
- George Eliot



...I UNDERSTAND THE
PATIENT HAD A ROUGH NIGHT.
LET'S INCREASE HIS DOSAGE OF
MIDAZOLAM BY FIVE MILLIGRAMS,
AND WATCH HIS INTRAVENOUS
FLUIDS.

YES,
DOCTOR.

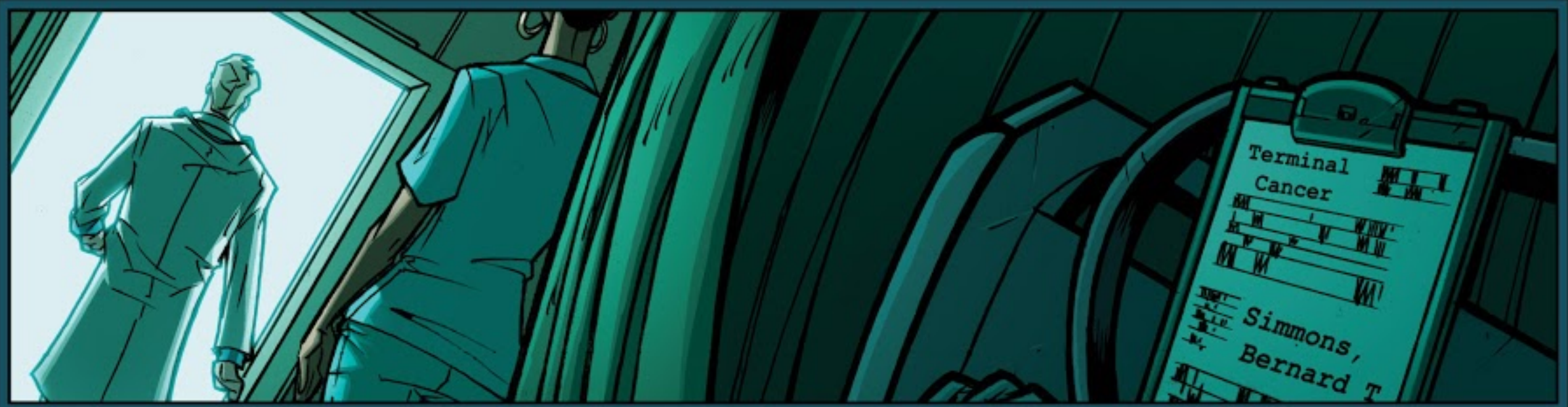


MONITOR
HIS RESPIRATORY
SECRETIONS AND LET ME
KNOW IF HE EXPERIENCES
ANY ADDITIONAL
DISCOMFORT. WHAT
ABOUT HIS FAMILY? HAVE
WE HEARD ANY WORD
FROM THEM?

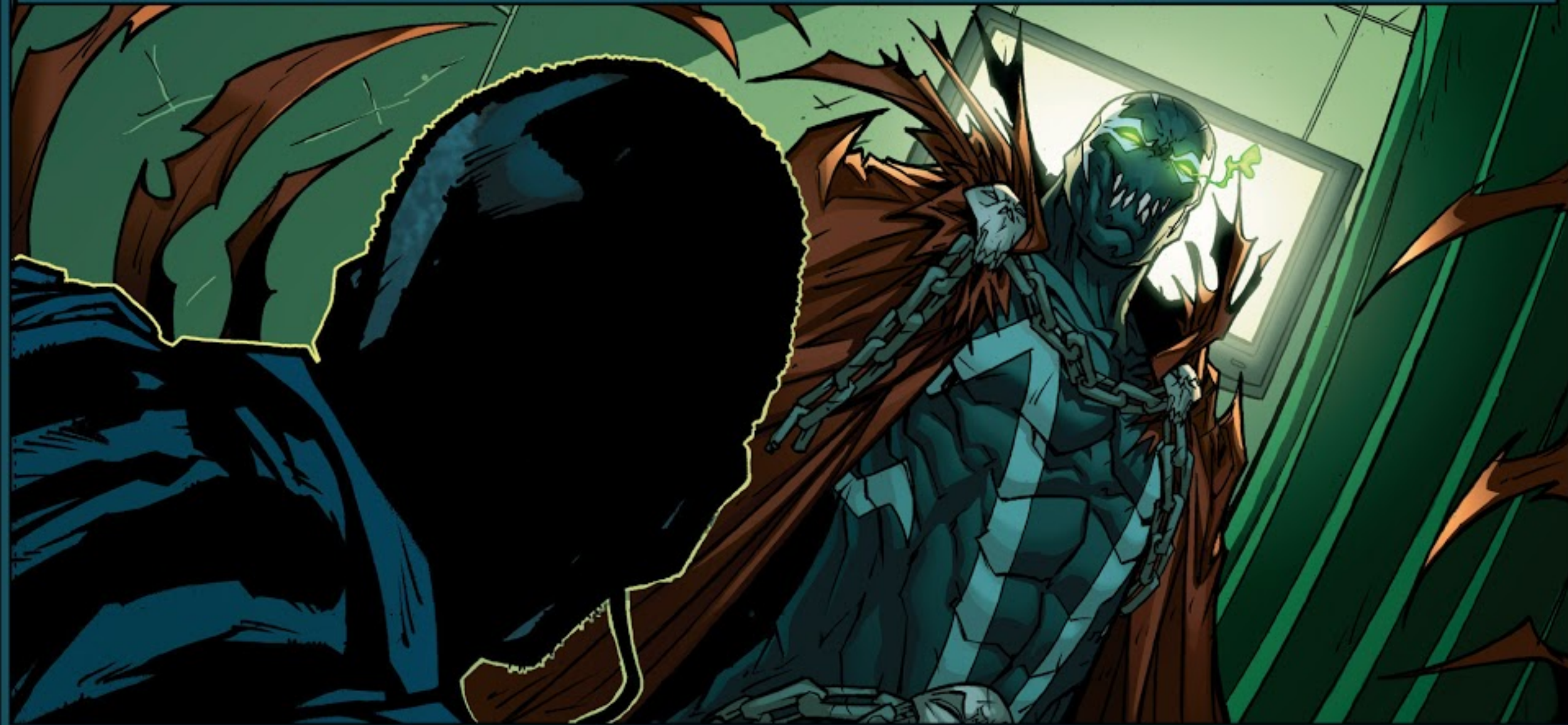
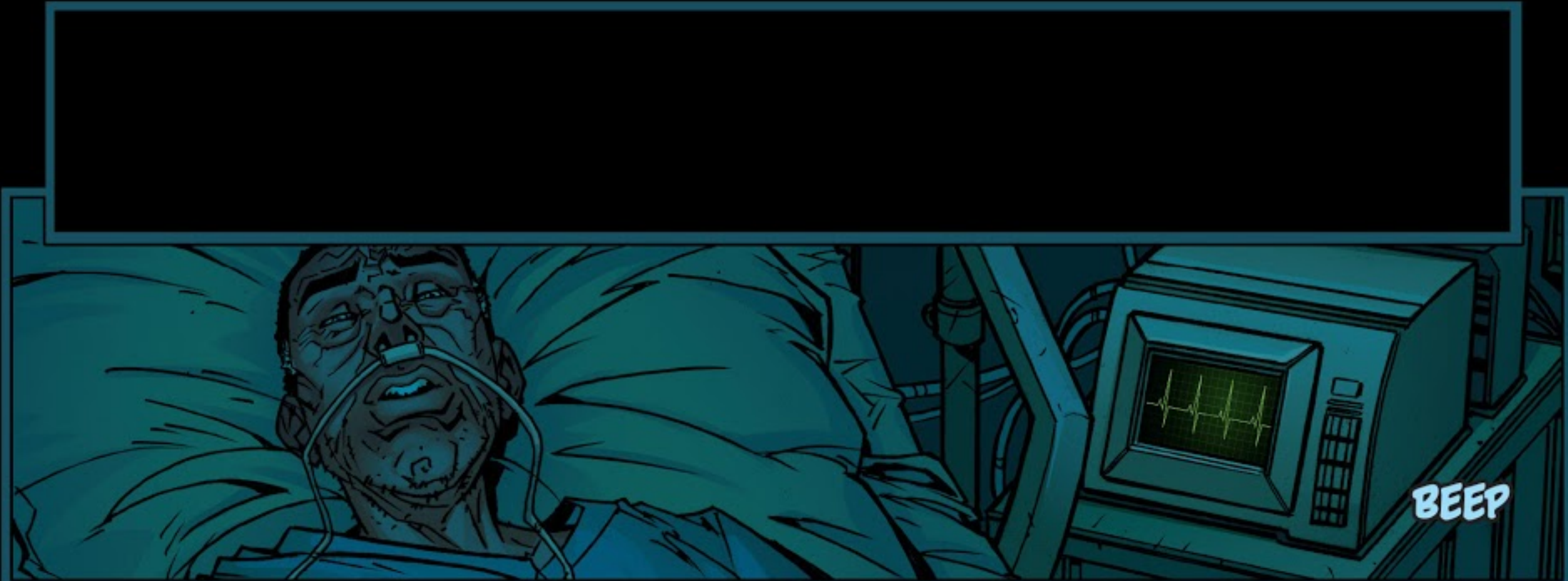
NOT
YET.



LET'S GET
CONTACT INFORMATION
FROM THE PATIENT'S WIFE.
I THINK HIS CHILDREN
DESERVE TO KNOW THEIR
FATHER DOESN'T HAVE
LONG...



Terminal
Cancer
Simmons,
Bernard T







MARC...?
IS THAT YOU,
SON? WHAT'S
HAPPENED...
AM I
AWAKE?

NOT
MARC.
YOUR
OTHER
SON.

I DON'T
HAVE ANOTHER
SON. HE DIED
YEARS AGO.



NOT
THAT YOU
ATTENDED HIS
FUNERAL.

AL?

I DON'T
HAVE TIME
TO EXPLAIN.
I JUST NEED
YOU TO COME
WITH ME.

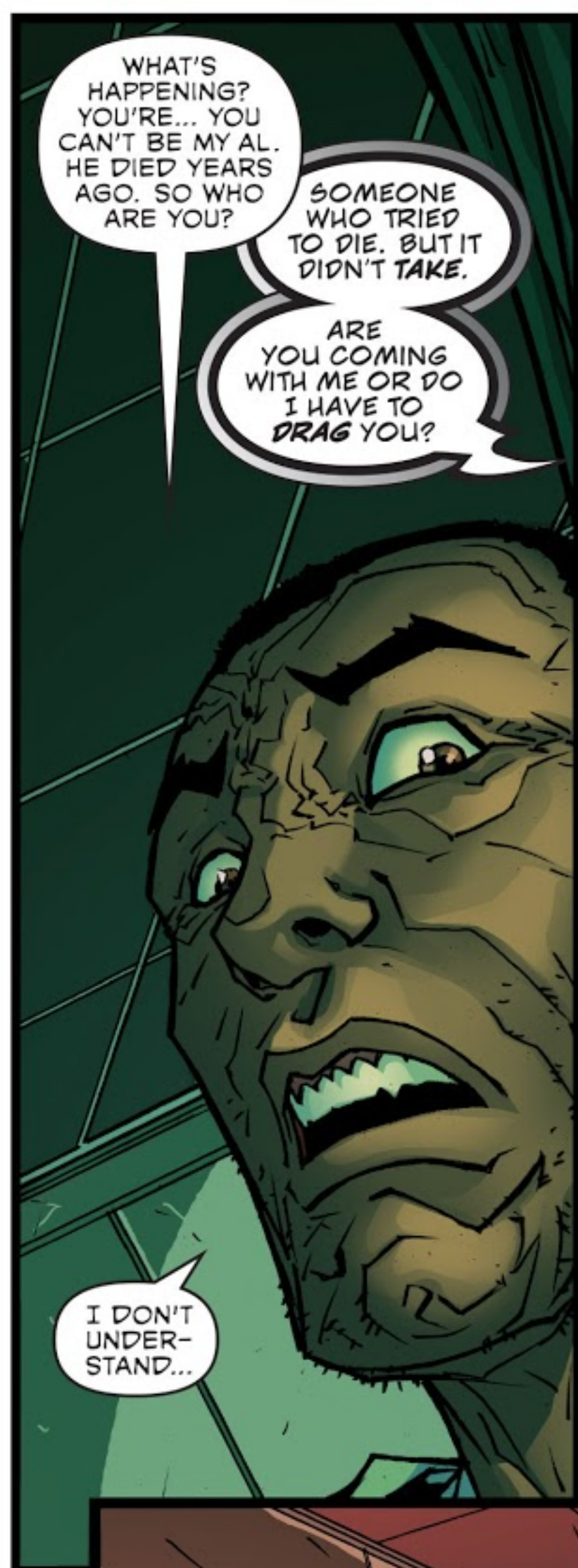
I CAN'T GO
ANYWHERE. I'M NOT
EVEN SUPPOSED TO BE
OUT OF BED. NOT UNTIL
THERE'S SIGNS THE
CANCER WILL GO INTO
IN REMISSION.



DAD.
LOOK
BEHIND
YOU.



JESUS.
THAT'S...
ME!









AL...
WAIT!

IF THIS
REALLY IS
YOU, THEN
YOU NEED
TO LISTEN
TO ME.

THERE ARE
SOME THINGS
I HAVE TO
EXPLAIN--

I'M NOT
HERE TO RESOLVE
ANYTHING. THAT'S
FOR YOU TO DO BY
YOURSELF. YOU'VE
GOT ETERNITY. MAYBE
YOU'LL MAKE SOME
HEADWAY.



MY ONLY
FUNCTION
IS TO GET YOU
WHERE YOU'RE
SUPPOSED TO
GO. THAT'S
IT!

NO.



IF GOD
DIDN'T
INTEND US TO
RECONCILE, HE
WOULDN'T HAVE
BROUGHT
YOU TO HELP
ME CROSS
OVER--

OH, LORD...
YOUR
MOTHER. SHE
WENT TO THE
STORE TO GET
ME SOME
GINGER ALE.
SHE WON'T
KNOW YET.



FIRST OF ALL,
GOD HAS NOTHING
TO DO WITH
ANY OF THIS. AND
GOD IS AN
ANDROGYNE.

SECOND
OF ALL, DON'T
WORRY ABOUT
MOM.



"SHE ISN'T WORRIED
ABOUT YOU. I
GUARANTEE IT."



I WENT TO SLEEP. SHE TOLD ME SHE WAS GOING TO FETCH GINGER ALE--

IMAGINE THE IRONY. SHE WENT TO A BAR INSTEAD, TRYING TO WASH AWAY HER FEELINGS. AND WHEN SHE FINDS OUT YOU'RE DEAD, SHE'LL FEEL SORRY FOR HERSELF AND THAT'LL BE HER NEXT EXCUSE.



AL, YOUR MOTHER LOVED US IN HER OWN WAY. SHE JUST... SHE WAS ALWAYS SCARED TO SHOW IT TO ANYONE. ESPECIALLY YOU AND MARC, IN CASE YOU'D HATE HER ANYWAY.

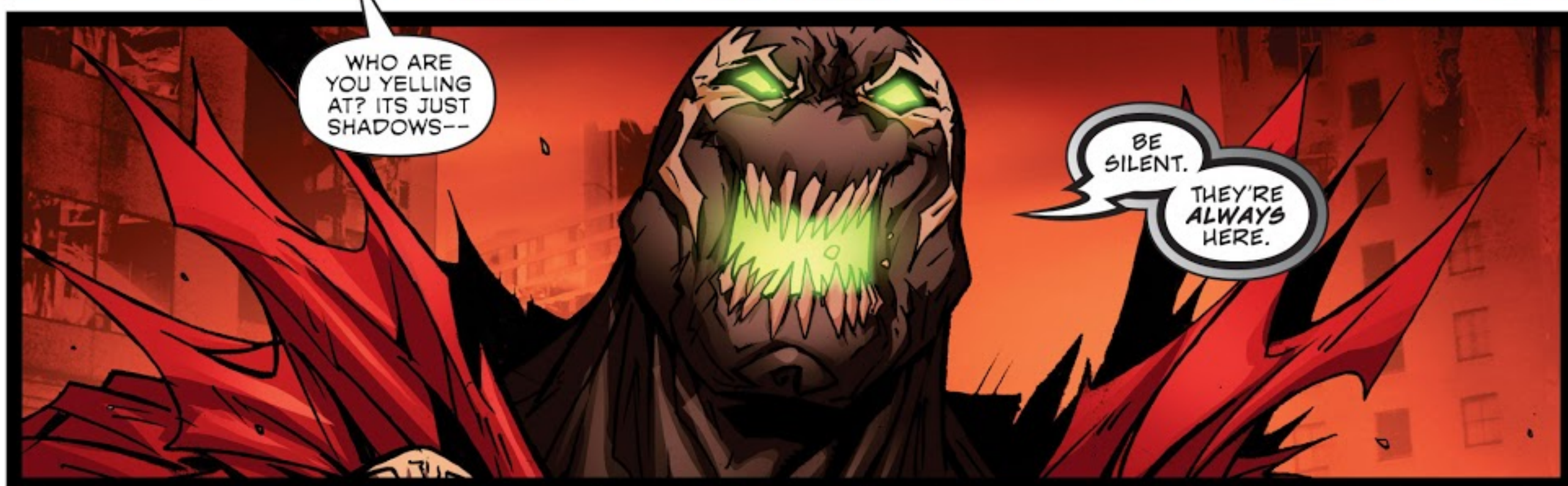
THE CONCEPT OF LOVE IS JUST AN APPROXIMATION. PEOPLE DON'T WANT TO BE LOVED. THEY WANT TO BE SAFE.

THEN WHY ARE YOU HERE?



TO MAKE THINGS RIGHT.

BUT NOT WITH YOU.





THESE
CREATURES
HAVE NEVER LIVED.
THEY'RE ASPECTS--
LESSER COPIES OF
AN ORIGINAL, SENT
TO DO HIS DIRTY
WORK.

DON'T
ADDRESS
THEM DIRECTLY.
DON'T REFER TO
THEM WITH YOUR
THOUGHTS. THEY'LL
FIND ALL THE
CRACKS.



HOW?
HOW CAN I
NOT THINK
OF SOME-
THING?

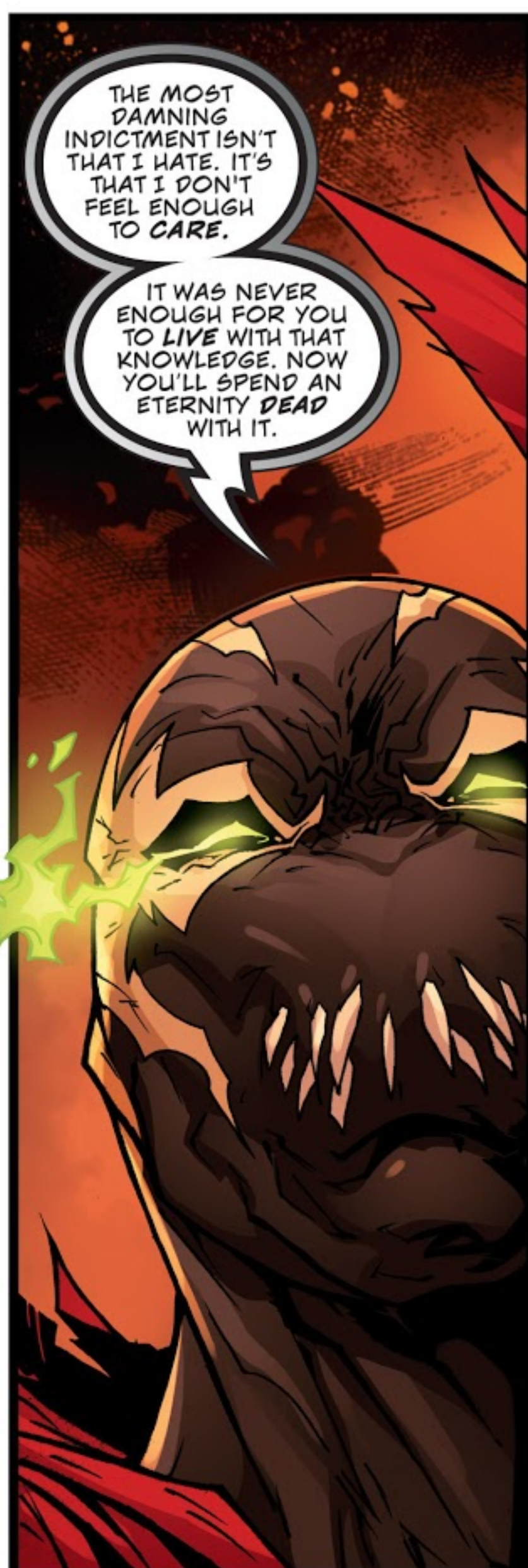
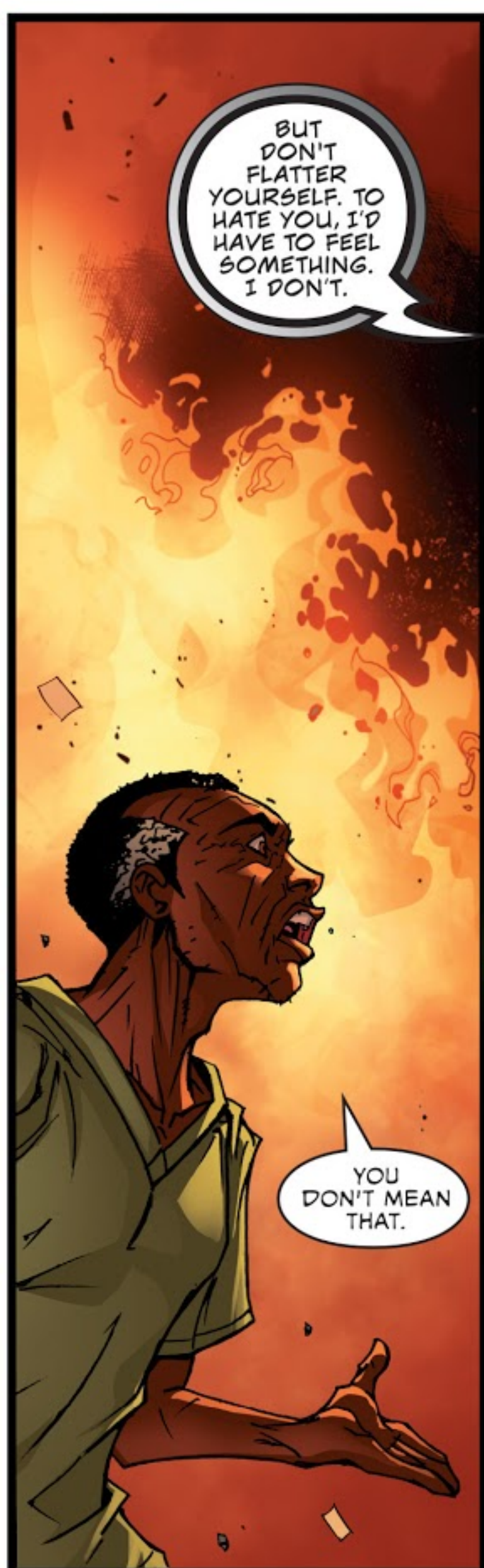
THAT
SHOULD BE
EASY.

THE SAME
WAY YOU NEVER
THOUGHT OF
ME.

~RU NINB'RI

~RU NINB'RI E2V0







I'M THE
PRODUCT OF A
LOVELESS MARRIAGE
BETWEEN A DRUNKEN BITCH
AND A MARTYR WHO
LIVED FOR HIS OWN
INTERESTS.

SO, I'M
NOTHING OF
CONSEQUENCE. JUST
THE END RESULT OF A
FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENT
FOR A TAX DEDUCTION.
NOTHING MORE,
NOTHING LESS.



WE
COULD
MAKE THIS
RIGHT.

YOU SAID IT
YOURSELF: THERE'S
ETERNITY--

THERE'S A
LENS THROUGH
WHICH WE ARE ALL
VIEWED--YOURS IS
TOO DISTORTED TO
RESHAPE. YOU CREATED
THIS CORRUPTION--
OTHERS ARE SIMPLY
SHAPING IT
FOR THEIR OWN
ENDS.



MARC STAYED
WITH US! HE STUCK
IT OUT... AS CRAPPY AS
LIFE WAS! BUT YOU-- YOU
LEFT! IF YOU WON'T
MAKE REPARATIONS FOR
YOUR MOTHER AND I,
THEN DO IT FOR HIS
SAKE!



MY BROTHER
IS A SACK OF
BLOOD, WRAPPED
AROUND A HEART.
HE DOESN'T
MATTER ANY
MORE.



NOW
COME WITH
ME, UNLESS YOU
WANT TO SPEND
THAT ETERNITY
OF YOURS IN
HELL.



WAIT...
IF WE'RE
NOT GOING
TO HELL, THEN
WHAT? YOU'RE
GOING TO
TAKE ME TO
HEAVEN?

TO YOUR
JUDGMENT
POINT.
NOTHING
MORE.

WHERE
YOU'RE SENT
AFTER THAT
ISN'T UP TO ME...
AND NO LONGER
UP TO YOU. HOW
AND WHY YOU
ARE JUDGED IS
A MATTER OF
RANDOM
CHANCE.



THEN
LET'S
GET THIS
OVER...

--QUIET!
MY SKIN...
IT JUST GOT
COLD.



SHOW
YOURSELF,
BELIAL.

I KNOW
YOU'RE
THERE.



HELLO,
AL...









ALL HE HAD TO DO WAS HAND YOU OVER AND I WOULD HAVE LEFT HIM ALONE. HE CHOSE TO DEFY ME. ALL THIS IS ON HIM.

YOU SEE, I'VE GOT PLANS FOR YOU. THERE'S SOMETHING WICKED COMING YOUR WAY, DEAR MISTER SIMMONS. YOU DON'T KNOW IT, AND YOU CAN'T **SEE** IT.

BUT THE PAIN YOU'LL FEEL FROM IT WILL BE VERY REAL.



MAYBE THAT'S WHY YOUR SON'S INSTINCT WERE RIGHT-- THAT HE SHOULDN'T CARE ABOUT THE FATE OF YOUR SOUL. MAYBE HE ALREADY KNEW YOU BELONGED TO ME. AND NOTHING-- INCLUDING HIM-- WAS GOING TO CHANGE THAT.

YOU'RE EXPENSIVE CURRENCY. I'LL USE YOU WISELY.



YOU'RE WRONG, BELIAL!



YOU DON'T MAKE THE RULES!

LOOK WHAT I'M HOLDING. YOU KNOW WHAT IT IS. WHAT IT CAN DO! NOW LEAVE THIS PLACE!

GOD'S SWORD!? NO! HE WASN'T TO INTERFERE. THAT WAS THE DEAL. THE BARGAIN HE MADE.

THE RULE! HE'S BROKEN THE RULE!



THIS ISN'T OVER.





AL...?
HOW DID
YOU...

SURVIVE?

YES.

BECAUSE
IT'S WHAT I DO.
IT'S THE ONE THING
YOU INSTILLED IN ME...
THAT NO MATTER WHAT
HAPPENS... I NEEDED TO
SURVIVE. YOUR ABUSE
AND NEGLECT TAUGHT
ME THAT SKILL VERY
QUICKLY.

SURVIVING
IS WHAT I'VE
BEEN DOING
SINCE I WAS
FIVE.



AL, I DON'T
KNOW WHY YOU'VE
DONE THIS FOR ME.
BUT I WANT YOU TO
UNDERSTAND...

I LOVED
YOU. I'VE
ALWAYS LOVED
YOU.

YOU'RE
MY SON. AND
THOUGH I WAS A
BAD FATHER, AND
DIDN'T KNOW HOW
TO ACT, IT DIDN'T
MEAN I DIDN'T
LOVE YOU OR
CARE ABOUT
YOU.

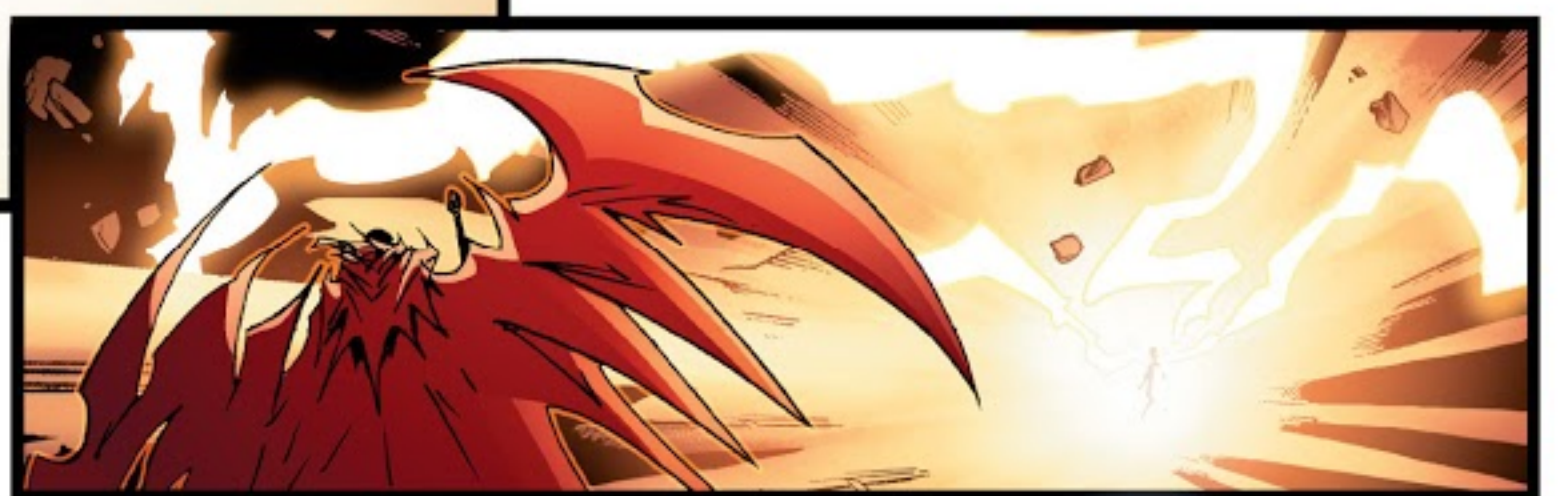
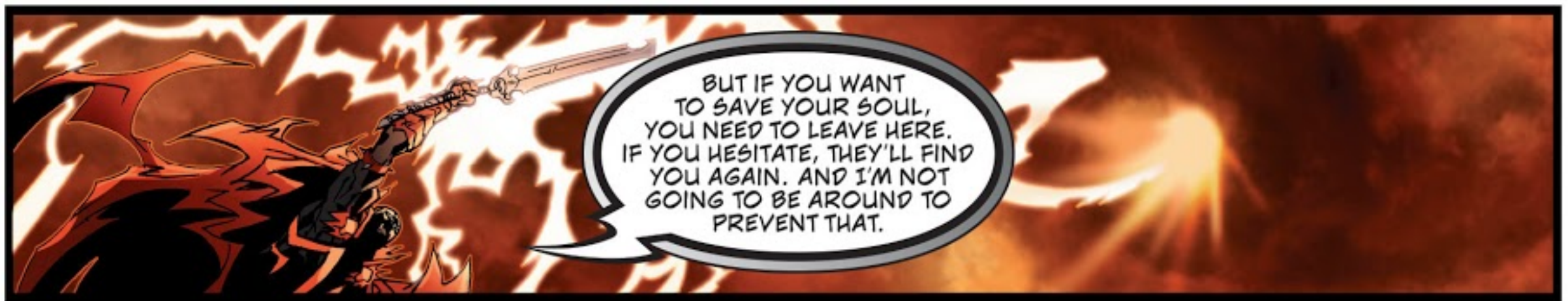
SO,
MAYBE IT'S
TOO LATE FOR
ME TO ASK,
BUT...

FORGIVE
ME. FOR
EVERYTHING I
DID TO YOU,
PLEASE, PLEASE
FORGIVE
ME.



YOU'RE
RIGHT.

IT'S
TOO LATE.





BYE,
DAD.

I HOPE
YOU FIND
WHAT YOU'RE
LOOKING
FOR.

SPAWN





THE R.M.S. TITANIC

APRIL 15TH, 1912.
FORTY-TWO MINUTES
PAST MIDNIGHT



TOMMY!
STAY
CLOSE! WE'RE
ALMOST
THERE.

SIR! YOU
NEED TO BE ON
THE UPPER DECK
WITH THE REST
OF THE THIRD
CLASS.

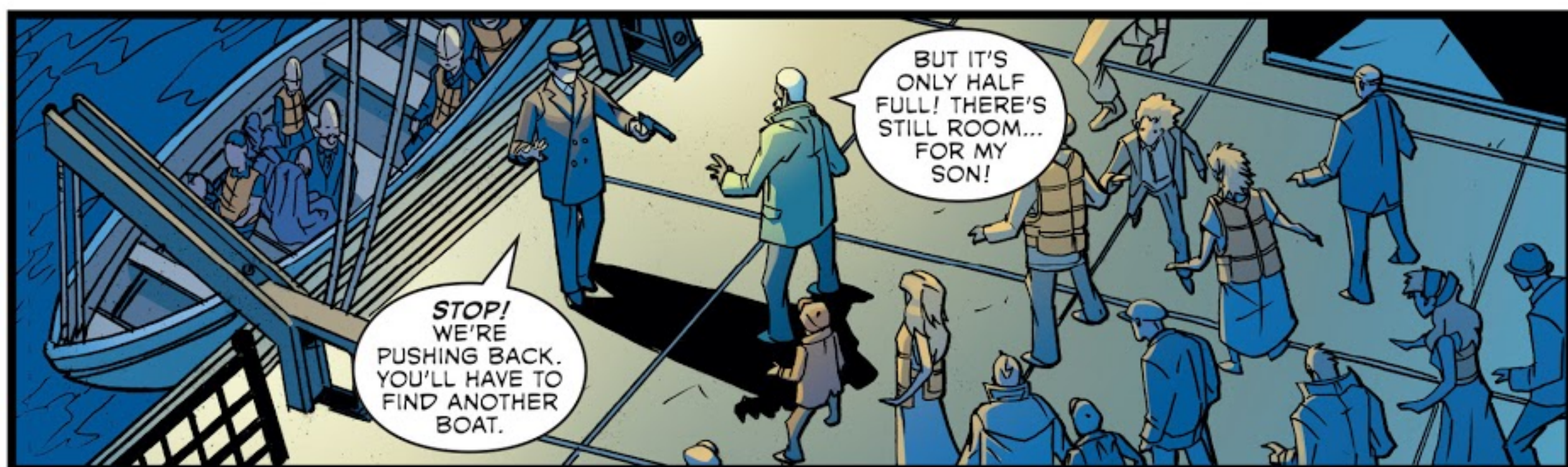
...CAPTAIN
SAID WE'VE
ONLY GOT TWO
HOURS LEFT
BEFORE THE ENTIRE
SHIP IS UNDER
WATER.



OVER
THERE, SON!
GET IN THAT
LIFEBOAT!

WHAT
ABOUT
YOU?

JUST
DO WHAT
I SAID!



STOP!
WE'RE
PUSHING BACK.
YOU'LL HAVE TO
FIND ANOTHER
BOAT.

BUT IT'S
ONLY HALF
FULL! THERE'S
STILL ROOM...
FOR MY
SON!



I SAID
HE'S NOT
GETTING
ON.

GODAMMIT...
HE'S JUST A
CHILD!



THEY'RE
NOT GOING
TO HELP, TOMMY.
WE HAVE TO DO
THIS ON OUR
OWN!

WHAT
ABOUT THE
OTHER
BOATS!?



THEY'RE
ALL GONE. I
COUNTED.

DAD! IN
THE SKY--
IS IT A
FLARE?

DOESN'T
MATTER! JUST
STAY WITH
ME!



LISTEN TO
ME, SON--YA
NEED TO BE
BRAVE. THINK OF
MOM UP IN HEAVEN.
SHE'LL ASK GOD T'
LOOK OVER US,
I PROMISE.

THE
WATER'S
GETTING
CLOSER.
WHAT DO
WE DO?



THE ONLY
THING LEFT.
WE...







SHE
DID IT!!
MOM ... SHE
SENT US
HELP!



LOOK AT THEM... ALL OF THEM. MOVING AROUND LIKE NOTHING MATTERS. THEY ONLY CARE ABOUT THEIR OWN LIVES.

THAT'S WHY WE GET PREYED UPON. BECAUSE WE'RE EASY TARGETS TO ISOLATE-- THEN CONVERT.

HEAVEN AND HELL BOTH UNDERSTAND THAT. THAT'S WHY THEY'LL NEVER LEAVE US ALONE-- EITHER OF THEM. THEY KNOW WE'RE A BUNCH OF SUCKERS.



THAT WE HUMANS ARE GULLIBLE. BUT TWO CAN PLAY THAT GAME.

AND SOON I'LL SHOW THEM WHY I CAME BACK.*



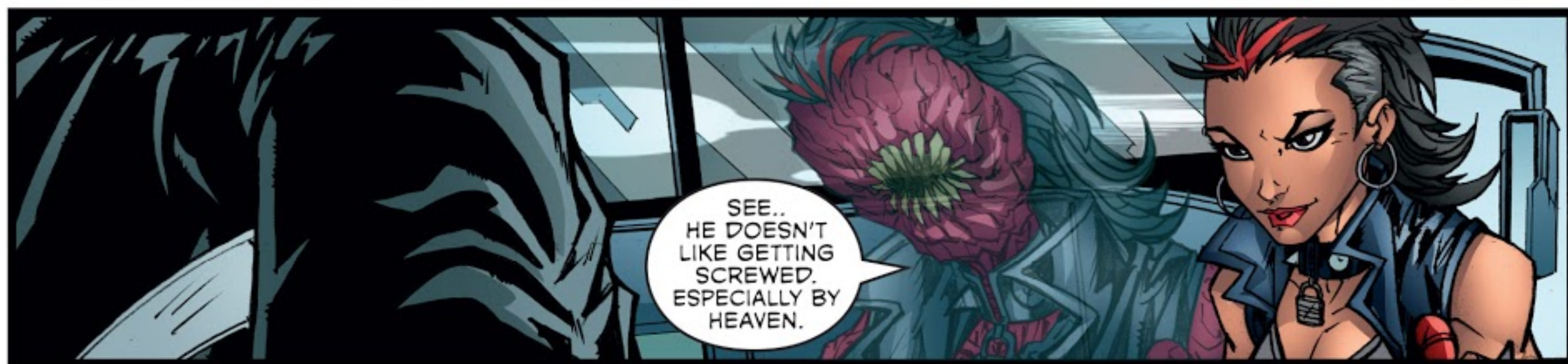
*SPAWN: Resurrection #1 - Todd



I JUST NEED TO BE A LITTLE MORE PATIENT.



HEY..?



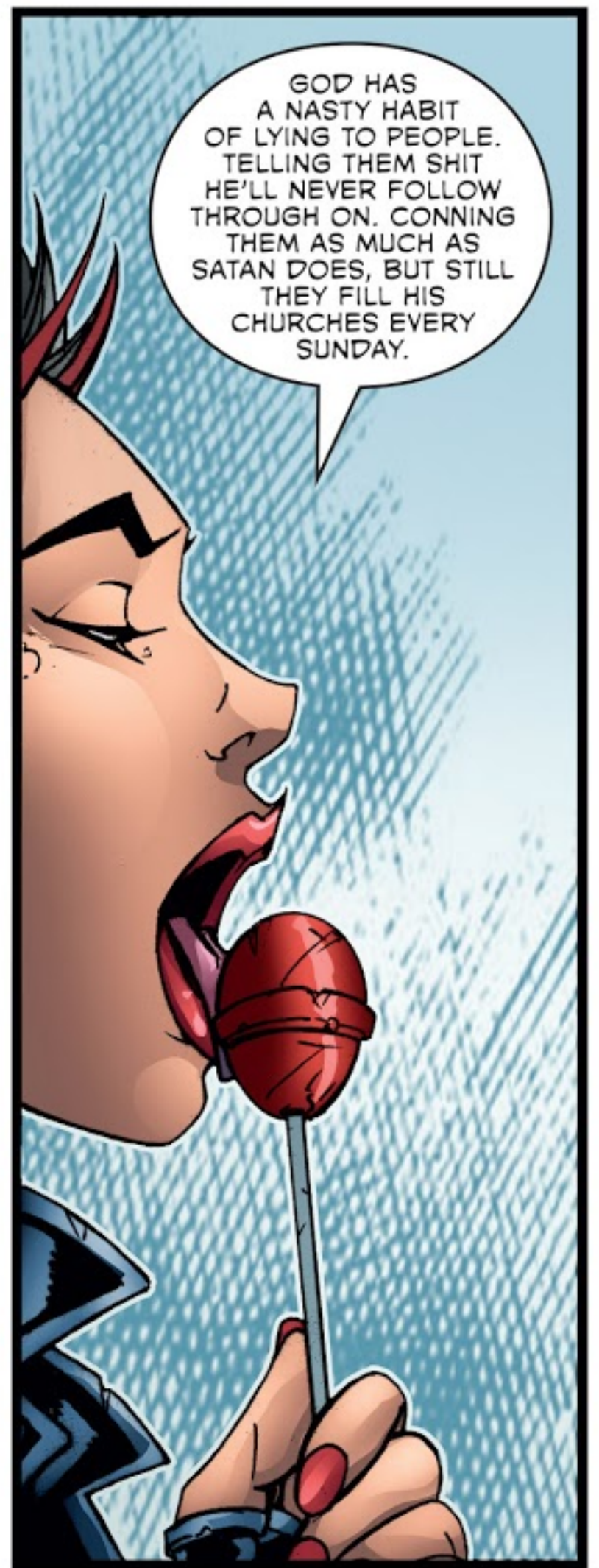


THAT'S WHY HE HAD WANDA KILLED. NEEDED TO SEND YOU A LITTLE MESSAGE. YOU HANG WITH GOD... PEOPLE YOU LOVE GET F*CKED UP.



WANDA WAS DEAD BEFORE GOD TALKED TO ME. NOW YOU'RE SAYING THE OPPOSITE!

THAT'S RIGHT. DON'T BE SURPRISED THOUGH...



GOD HAS A NASTY HABIT OF LYING TO PEOPLE. TELLING THEM SHIT HE'LL NEVER FOLLOW THROUGH ON. CONNING THEM AS MUCH AS SATAN DOES, BUT STILL THEY FILL HIS CHURCHES EVERY SUNDAY.



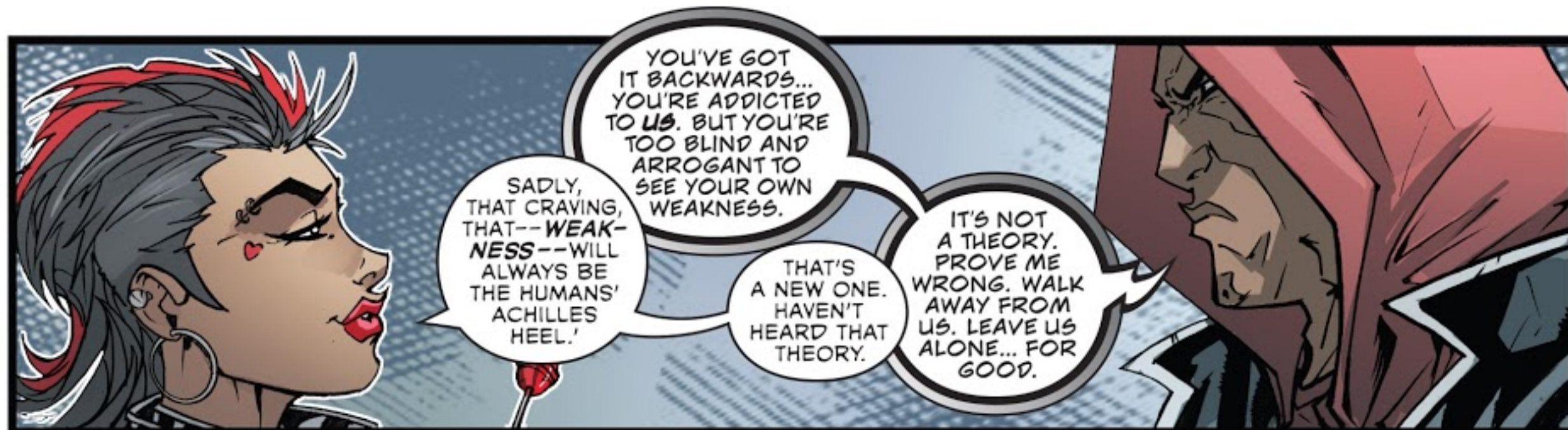
YOU KNOW WHAT THE DIFFERENCE IS BETWEEN SATAN AND GOD?



SATAN IS MORE TRUTHFUL ABOUT WHO HE IS. HE DOESN'T MAKE ANY PRETENSES ABOUT WHAT HE IS OR WHAT HE WANTS. AND WHAT HE WANTS IS **EXACTLY** THE SAME THINGS GOD DOES.

POWER. RESPECT. HUMAN OBEDIENCE. AND THE TOTAL ANNIHILATION OF HIS MORTAL ENEMY. GOD JUST CLOAKS THOSE WANTS IN THE GUISE OF HOPE AND VIRTUE.

KNOWING YOU HUMANS DESPERATELY NEED SOMETHING MORE THAN SIMPLY BEING ALIVE.





TWO TICKETS, PLEASE.

YOU COMING?

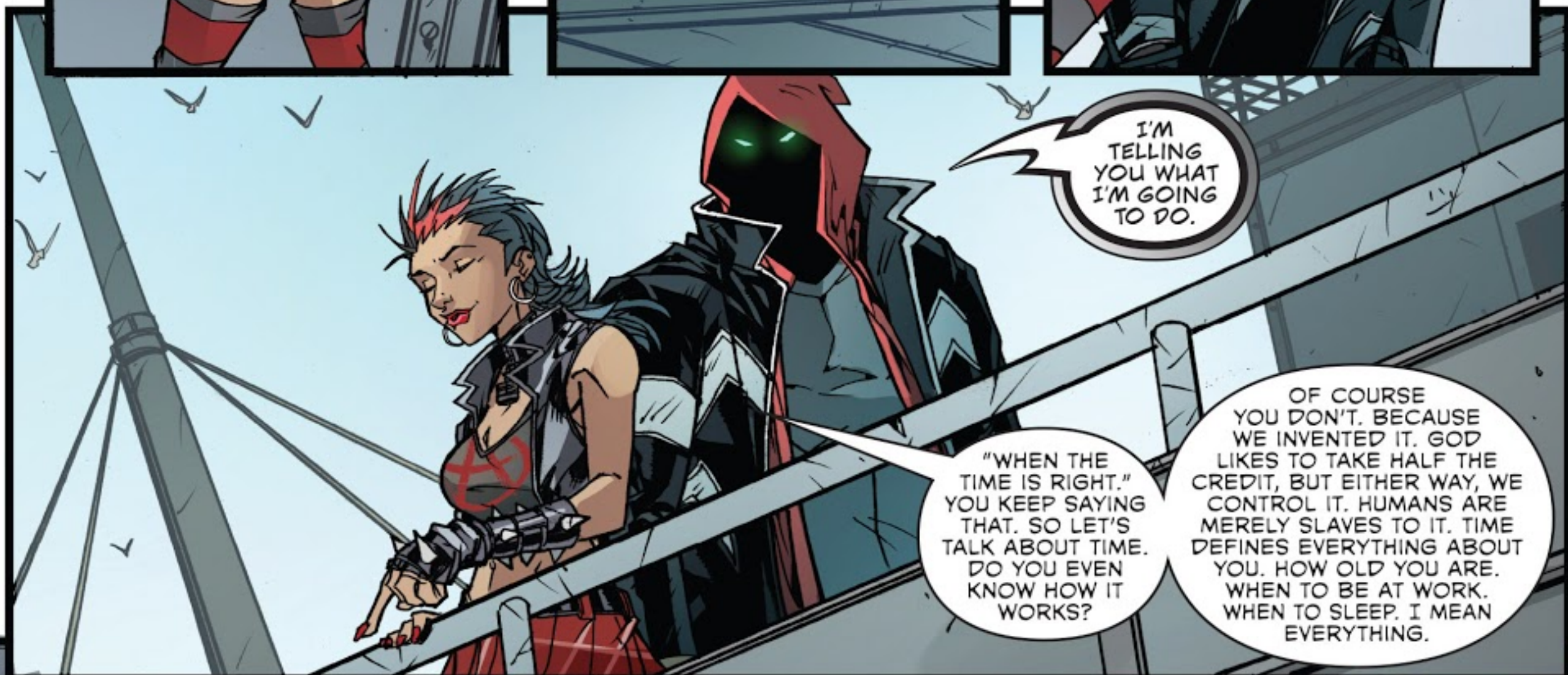


YOU'RE WELCOME TO START IF YOU WANT. ENLIGHTEN ME AS TO WHY WE SHOULD LEAVE YOU ALONE.

I SAID YOU CAN'T. AND NEITHER CAN GOD. AS LONG AS WE EXIST YOU HAVE A PURPOSE. WITHOUT US YOU'RE NOTHING.

AND THERE'S ONE THING I'VE LEARNED ABOUT HEAVEN AND HELL. YOUR EGOS WON'T ALLOW YOU TO BE 'NOTHING.' AND THAT'S WHY, WHEN THE TIME IS RIGHT, I'LL DESTROY BOTH OF YOU.

YOU THREATENING US?



I'M TELLING YOU WHAT I'M GOING TO DO.

"WHEN THE TIME IS RIGHT." YOU KEEP SAYING THAT. SO LET'S TALK ABOUT TIME. DO YOU EVEN KNOW HOW IT WORKS?

OF COURSE YOU DON'T. BECAUSE WE INVENTED IT. GOD LIKES TO TAKE HALF THE CREDIT, BUT EITHER WAY, WE CONTROL IT. HUMANS ARE MERELY SLAVES TO IT. TIME DEFINES EVERYTHING ABOUT YOU. HOW OLD YOU ARE. WHEN TO BE AT WORK. WHEN TO SLEEP. I MEAN EVERYTHING.



EVEN WHEN YOU THINK IT DOESN'T MATTER, IT DOES. YOU FALL IN LOVE BECAUSE YOU KNOW EVENTUALLY YOU'LL BE DEAD AND YOU DON'T WANT TO WASTE YOUR TIME ON EARTH ALONE.



SO, IF WE
CONTROL TIME...
AREN'T YOU CURIOUS
AS TO HOW MUCH WE CAN
MANIPULATE IT? HAVEN'T YOU
EVER ASKED YOURSELF WHY
YOU CAME BACK FIVE YEARS
LATER AFTER YOU DIED--
WHEN IT SEEMED LIKE
ONLY A SECOND
TO YOU?*

AND MORE
IMPORTANTLY,
SHOULDN'T YOUR
BRAIN BE SCREAMING
AT YOU AS TO HOW
ALL OF THIS
MIGHT EFFECT
WANDA'S CURRENT
CONDITION?

*Way back in issue 1--- Todd



YOU
SHOULD.



HERE, LET
ME SHOW YOU
AN EXAMPLE
OF HOW THIS
WORKS.

SNAP



ON IT'S
MAIDEN VOYAGE
THE TITANIC SANK.
BUT DID IT HAVE TO?
COULD THAT TRAGEDY BE
UNDONE? OR AT THE VERY
LEAST, DID SOME OF THOSE
WHO PERISHED, SURVIVE?
AND SHOULD SOME OF
THOSE WHO SURVIVED...
HAVE DIED?

IF
YOU'RE
TELLING ME
THAT...

I'M NOT
TELLING YOU
ANYTHING. I'M
SHOWING YOU
OPTIONS.

"AND AN
ALTERNATE
POSSIBILITY."

DAD!
DO YOU SEE
ALL THEM WHITE-
CAPS? HOW BIG
DO YOU THINK
THEY CAN
GET?

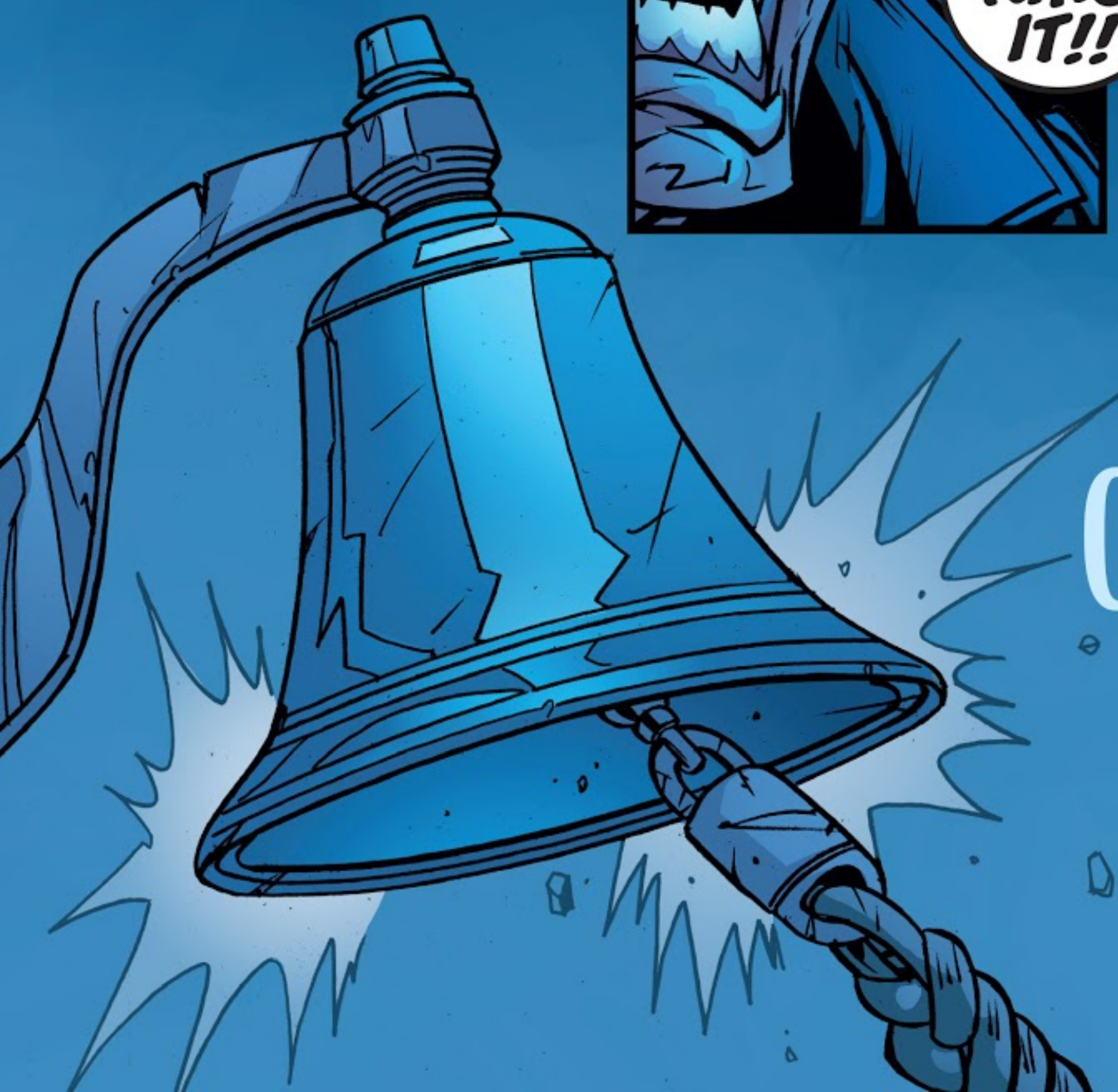
HEY,
MISTER!... YOU
EVER SEEN
BIGGER SWELLS
THAN THAT?

TOMMY!
MIND YOUR
MANNERS!

I'M SORRY,
SIR, HE GETS
EXCITED AT TIMES.
AND WE APOLOGIZE
FOR BEING ON THIS
DECK WHEN WE'RE
NOT SUPPOSED TO.
WON'T HAPPEN
AGAIN.

NO.
IT'S FINE.
EVERYTHING'S
FINE. WE WERE
ALL YOUNG
ONCE.

SOME-
THING'S
WRONG.



CLANG
CLANG
CLANG

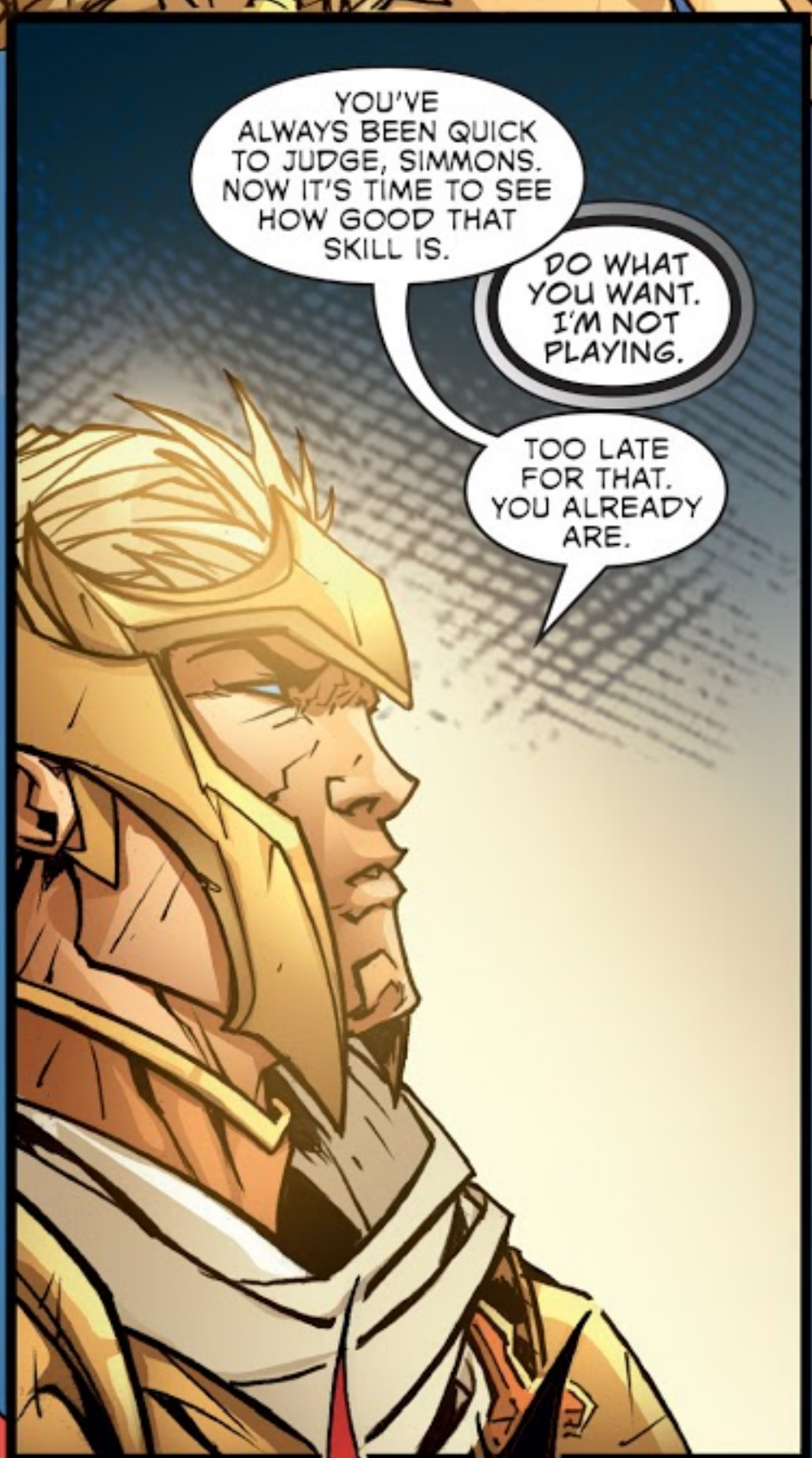


YOU HEAR THAT, HELLSPAWN? DISASTER'S COMING TO ALL THESE PEOPLE. THE QUESTION IS: FOR A FEW OF THEM... ARE YOU WILLING TO HELP CHANGE THEIR FATE?

GABRIEL! I KNEW HELL NEEDED A TRAITOR FOR THIS LITTLE TEST.



OF COURSE THEY PICKED YOU.



YOU'VE ALWAYS BEEN QUICK TO JUDGE, SIMMONS. NOW IT'S TIME TO SEE HOW GOOD THAT SKILL IS.

DO WHAT YOU WANT. I'M NOT PLAYING.

TOO LATE FOR THAT. YOU ALREADY ARE.

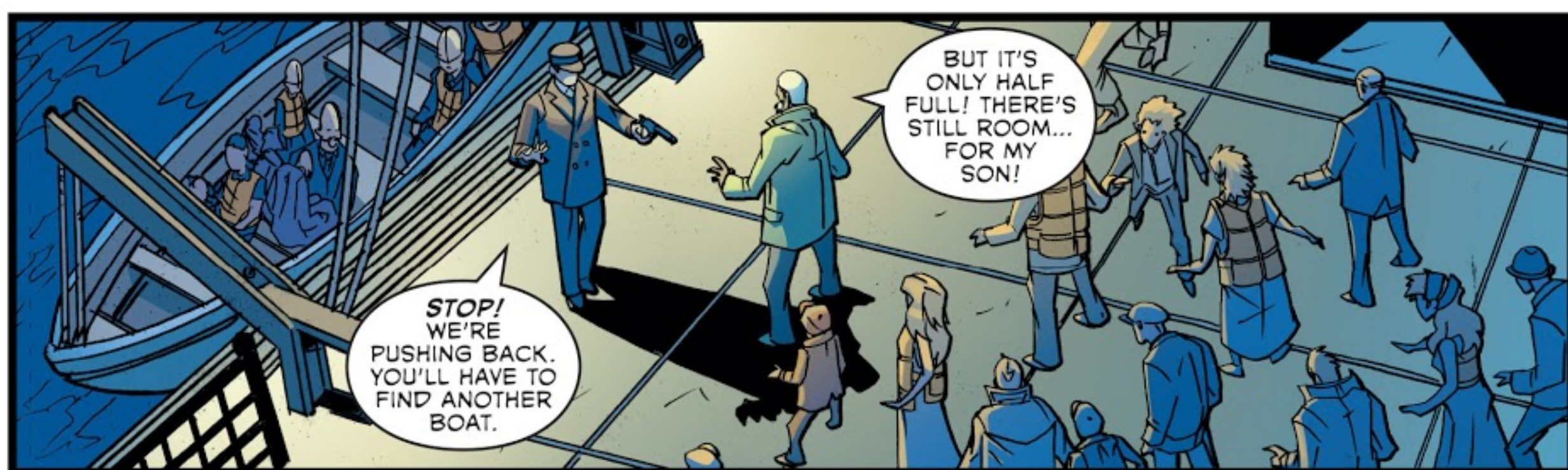


YOU'RE HERE BECAUSE YOU THINK YOU CAN SAVE YOUR WIFE WANDA. IT'S NOT THAT SIMPLE. TO UNDO THE PAST-- TO CHANGE FATE-- COMES WITH A PRICE. THE QUESTION TONIGHT, IS WHAT PRICE YOU'RE WILLING TO PAY.



TO WHAT DEPTH YOU'LL GO TO SAVE A SOUL?







I KNOW
HOW THIS
ENDS.

NO. YOU
ONLY KNOW
WHAT
YOU'VE
READ.



THEY'RE
NOT GOING
TO HELP, TOMMY.
WE HAVE TO DO
THIS ON OUR
OWN!

WHAT
ABOUT THE
OTHER
BOATS!?

THEY'RE
ALL GONE. I
COUNTED.



THOUGH
THEY DON'T EVEN
KNOW YOU EXIST,
HELLSPAWN... SOME
OF THEM WILL
DESPERATELY NEED
YOU TO MAKE A
CHOICE!



LISTEN TO
ME, SON--YA
NEED TO BE
BRAVE. THINK OF
MOM UP IN HEAVEN.
SHE'LL ASK GOD T'
LOOK OVER US,
I PROMISE.

THE
WATER...
IT'S GETTING
CLOSER.
WHAT DO
WE DO?



THE ONLY
THING LEFT.
WE...





THROUGH
YOUR GRACE,
YOU SHALL BE SAVED.
FOR I AM YOUR
SAVIOR!

NO!

SHE
DID IT!!
MOM!...
SHE SENT
HELP!

DAD!
LOOK!

STOP
FEEDING
THEM YOUR LIES!
YOU'RE NOT
HERE TO HELP
THEM...



YOU'RE HERE TO TORTURE THEM!

ARE YOU INSANE!? THAT WATER WILL FREEZE THEM! THEY'LL DIE UNLESS WE DO SOMETHING!



SLAM



YOU LEAVE THEM ALONE! YOU DON'T GET TO DECIDE THEIR FATE!

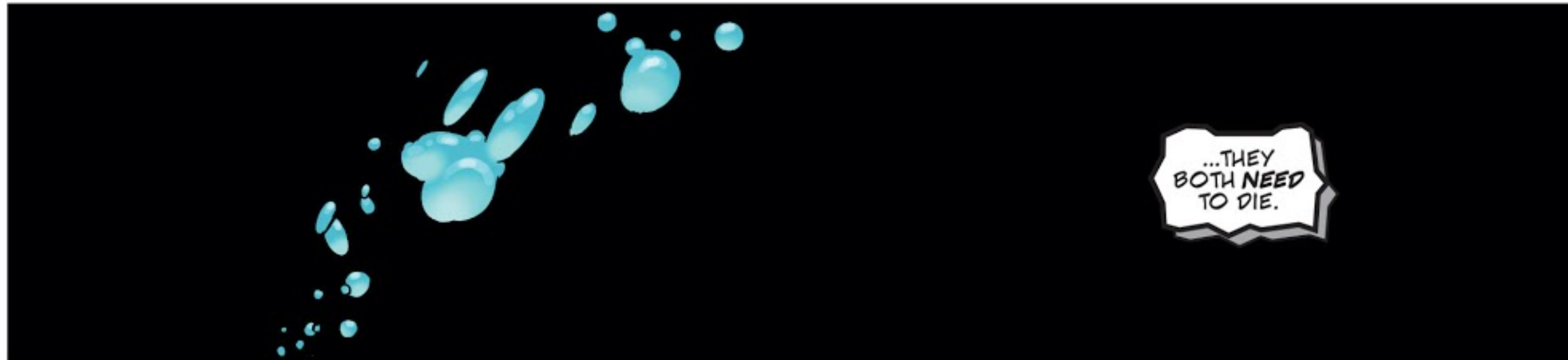
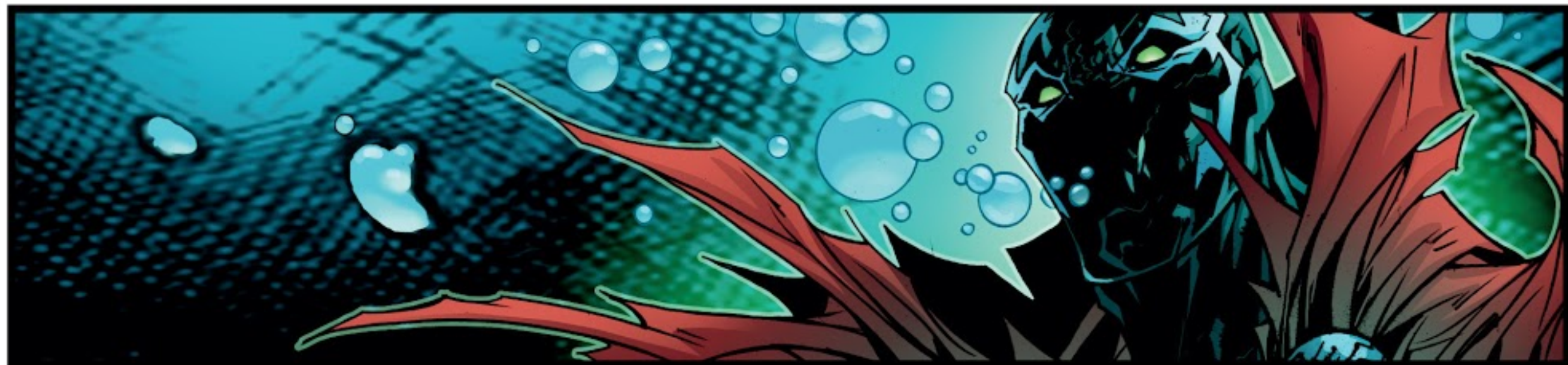


THEN YOU DO IT! SAVE THEM!

WHO CARES WHO DOES IT? THEY NEED OUR HELP! NOW!!



LIAR!



BECAUSE I WON'T
FALL FOR THIS
DEMENTED TRICK OF
YOURS. AND YOU
WERE WRONG--
I **DO KNOW** HOW
TIME WORKS.

I ALTER
SOMEONE'S
LIFE-- **ANY-
ONE'S LIFE**
FROM THE
PAST-- THEN
EVERYTHING,
FROM THAT
DAY FORWARD,
GETS ALTERED
TOO. LIKE A
GIANT RIPPLE
EFFECT.

THAT'S EXACTLY
WHAT SATAN WANTS...
FOR ME TO CHANGE
THE COURSE OF
HISTORY. BECAUSE
IF I DO, THERE'S A
CHANCE I WOULDN'T
HAVE MET WANDA.

I WON'T GIVE
YOU THAT
SATISFACTION!

"YOU SURPRISE
ME, SIMMONS. I
THOUGHT YOU'D
TAKE THE BAIT.

AND IF I NEVER
KNEW HER...
WHY TRY AND
SAVE HER?

THAT'S YOUR CRUEL
TEST, ISN'T IT,
SATAN? YOU WANT
ME TO SEAL
WANDA'S FATE, NOT
YOU! WELL...

"MY LORD SAID
YOU WOULDN'T,
HE SAID YOU MAY
HAVE GAINED MORE
KNOWLEDGE
DURING YOUR
RECENT ABSENCE.

"IF THAT'S TRUE..."

"YOU NOW
UNDER-
STAND..."

SNAP

...THINGS
CAN BE ALTERED
IF ONE WANTS. AND
THOSE THAT WERE ONCE
ALIVE CAN DIE. AND
THOSE THAT WERE ONCE
DEAD COULD STILL
BE ALIVE!

LIKE YOUR
BELOVED
WANDA. AND
NOW...

NOW I'M
GOING TO MAKE
YOU AN OFFER YOU
CAN'T REFUSE.

Next:
ANOTHER
deal
with the
Devil?

SPAWN





YOU CAN
HAVE HER
BACK... JUST
LIKE SHE
WAS.



IT WOULD
BE LIKE
NOTHING EVER
HAPPENED. YOUR
WIFE WOULD BE
COMPLETELY
BACK TO
NORMAL.



SO, THE
QUESTION IS--
WHAT **ARE YOU**
WILLING TO GIVE
UP FOR HER?
WHAT'S WANDA'S
SOUL WORTH
TO YOU?

WHAT
DO YOU
WANT?



YOU.

OF
COURSE.

IT'S
ALWAYS
BEEN
YOU.



WHAT ELSE?

YOUR SYMBIOTE. WE WANT YOUR SYMBIOTE.



WHY?

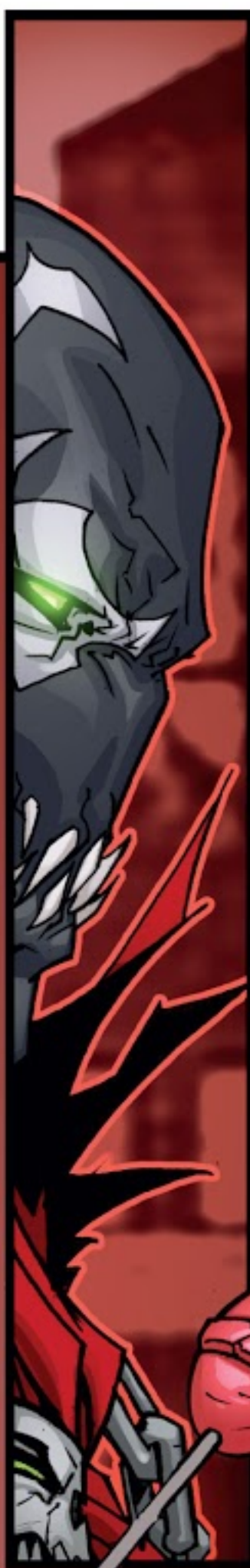
SATAN DIDN'T GIVE ME DETAILS.



BUT NOW THAT YOU'VE PASSED YOUR FIRST TEST*--YOU'VE GOT A BETTER SENSE OF HOW TIME CAN BE UNWOUND.

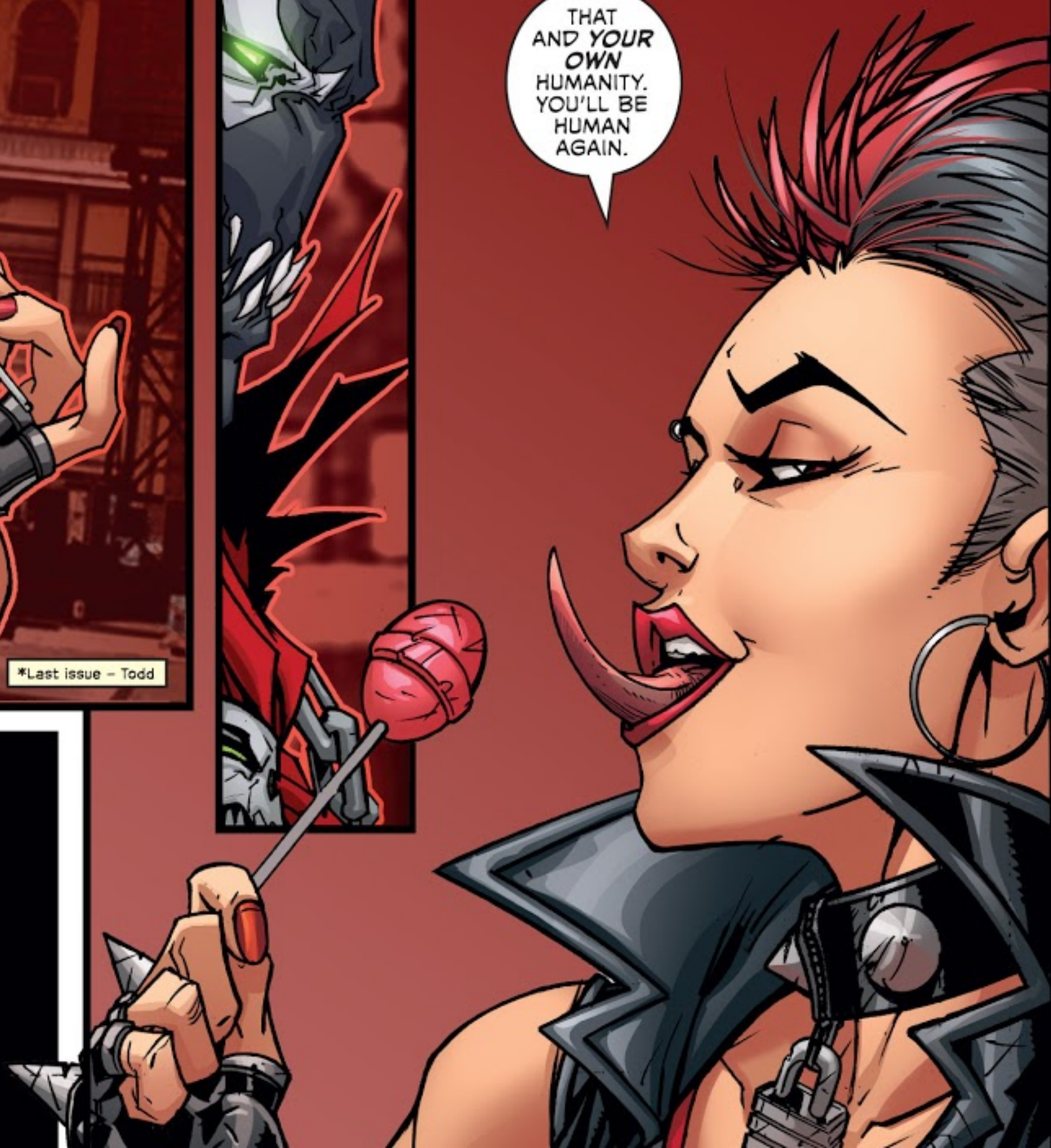
SO...

*Last issue - Todd



HERE'S HOW IT WORKS. HERE'S THE OFFER. YOU HAND OVER YOUR COSTUME--THE SYMBIOTE--THEN BEND A KNEE AND VOW NEVER TO STEP FOOT IN HELL EVER AGAIN. YOU DO THAT AND WE'LL GIVE HER BACK TO YOU.

THAT AND **YOUR OWN** HUMANITY. YOU'LL BE HUMAN AGAIN.





THEN YOU
AND WANDA
CAN LIVE
HAPPILY EVER
AFTER.



THOUGH,
TECHNICALLY,
SHE'S NOT
REALLY YOUR
WIFE ANYMORE.
IS SHE?

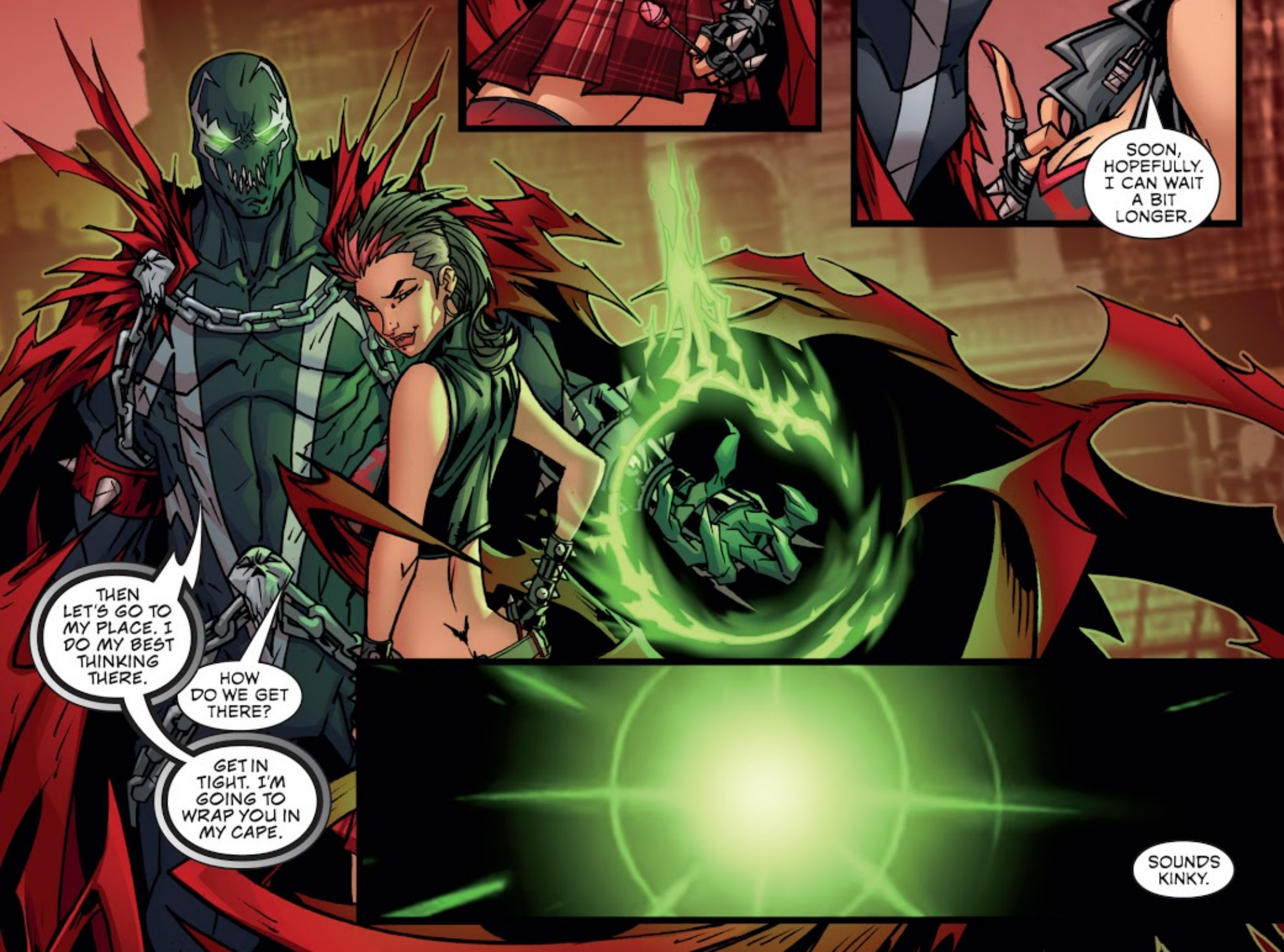
SHE DID
MARRY ANOTHER
MAN AND BORE
HIS CHILDREN.
SO THAT'S GOTTA
SUCK.

IF YOU
WERE MY
MAN, I WOULDN'T
HAVE DONE THAT TO
YOU. I JUST THINK
YOU DESERVE
BETTER THAN
THAT.

WHEN
DO YOU
NEED MY
ANSWER?



SOON,
HOPEFULLY.
I CAN WAIT
A BIT
LONGER.

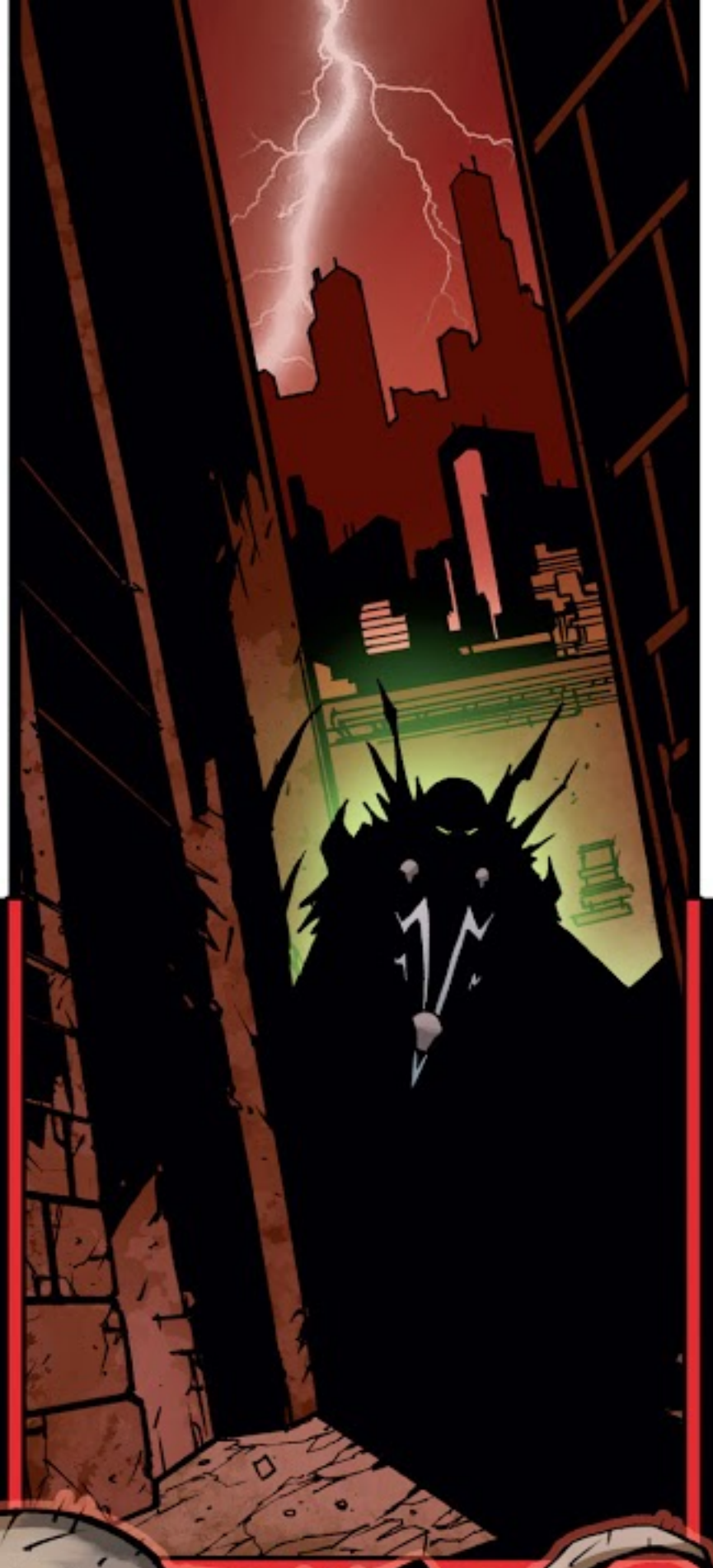
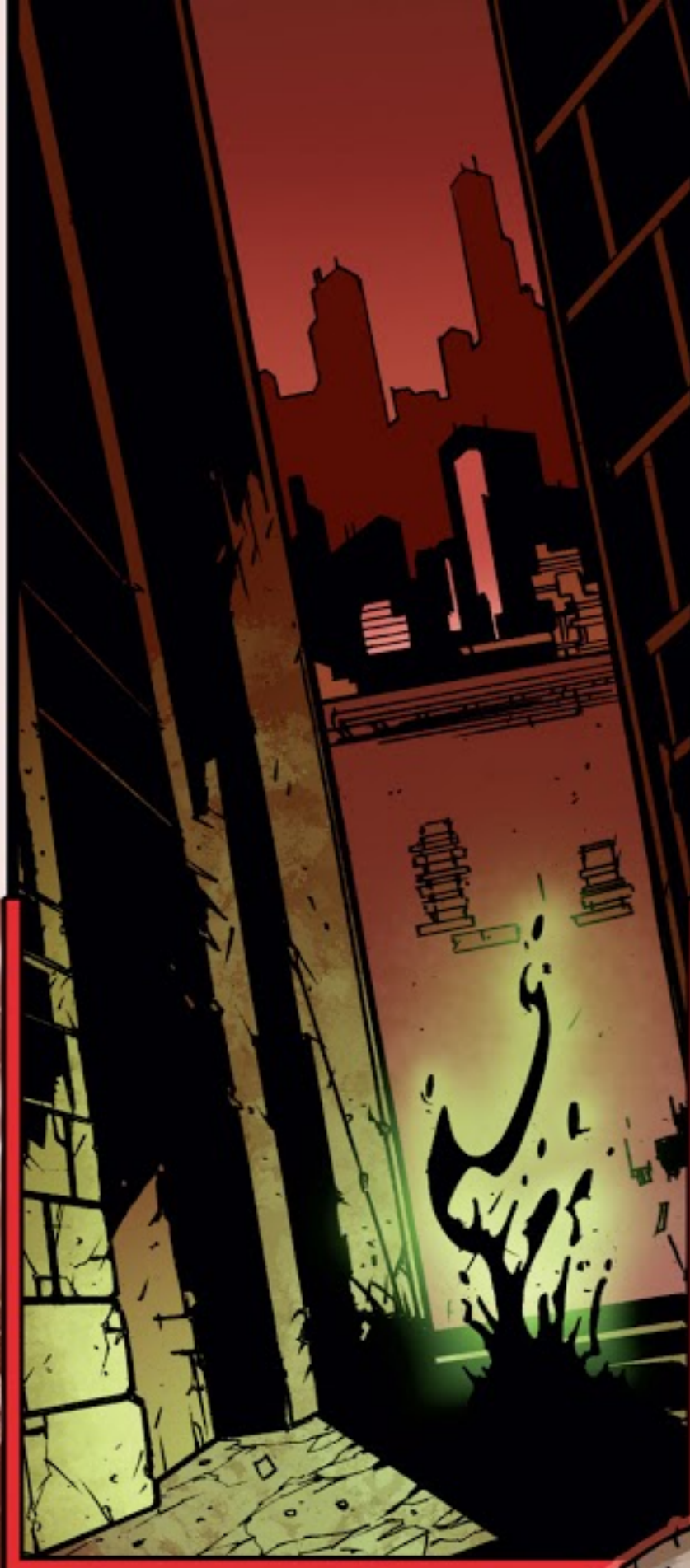


THEN
LET'S GO TO
MY PLACE. I
DO MY BEST
THINKING
THERE.

HOW
DO WE GET
THERE?

GET IN
TIGHT. I'M
GOING TO
WRAP YOU IN
MY CAPE.

SOUNDS
KINKY.



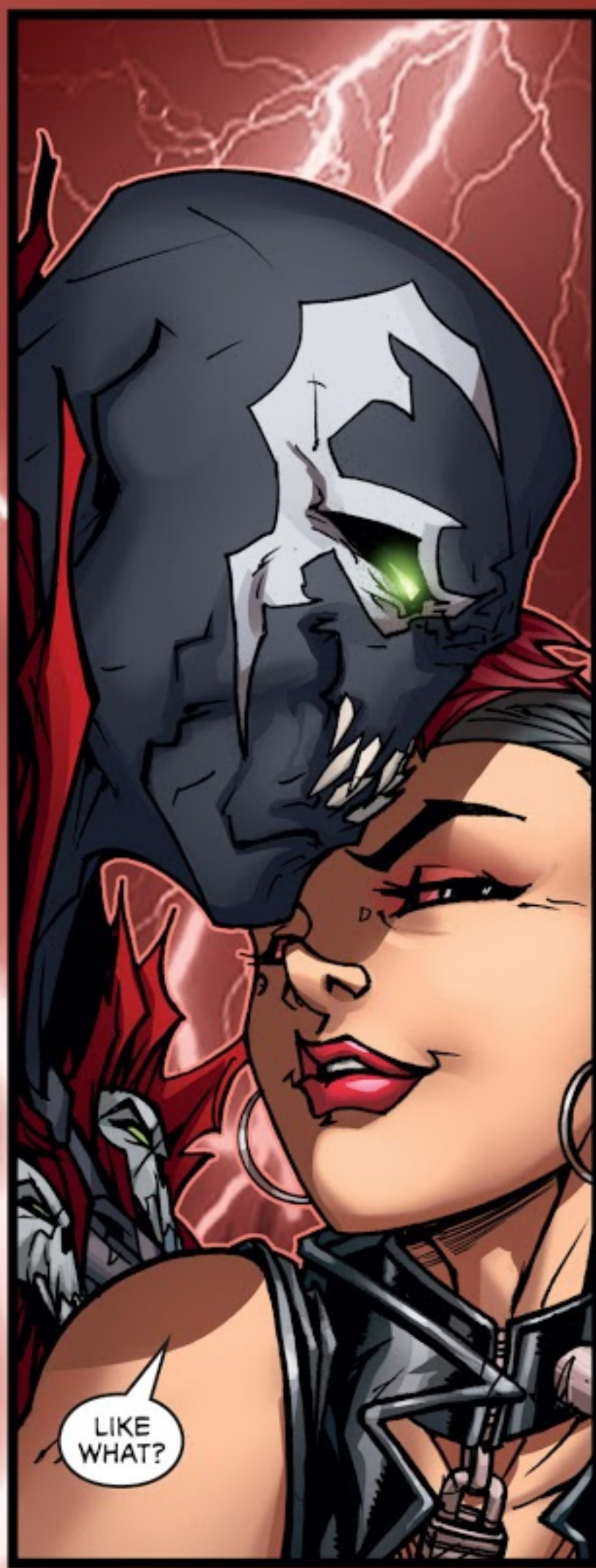
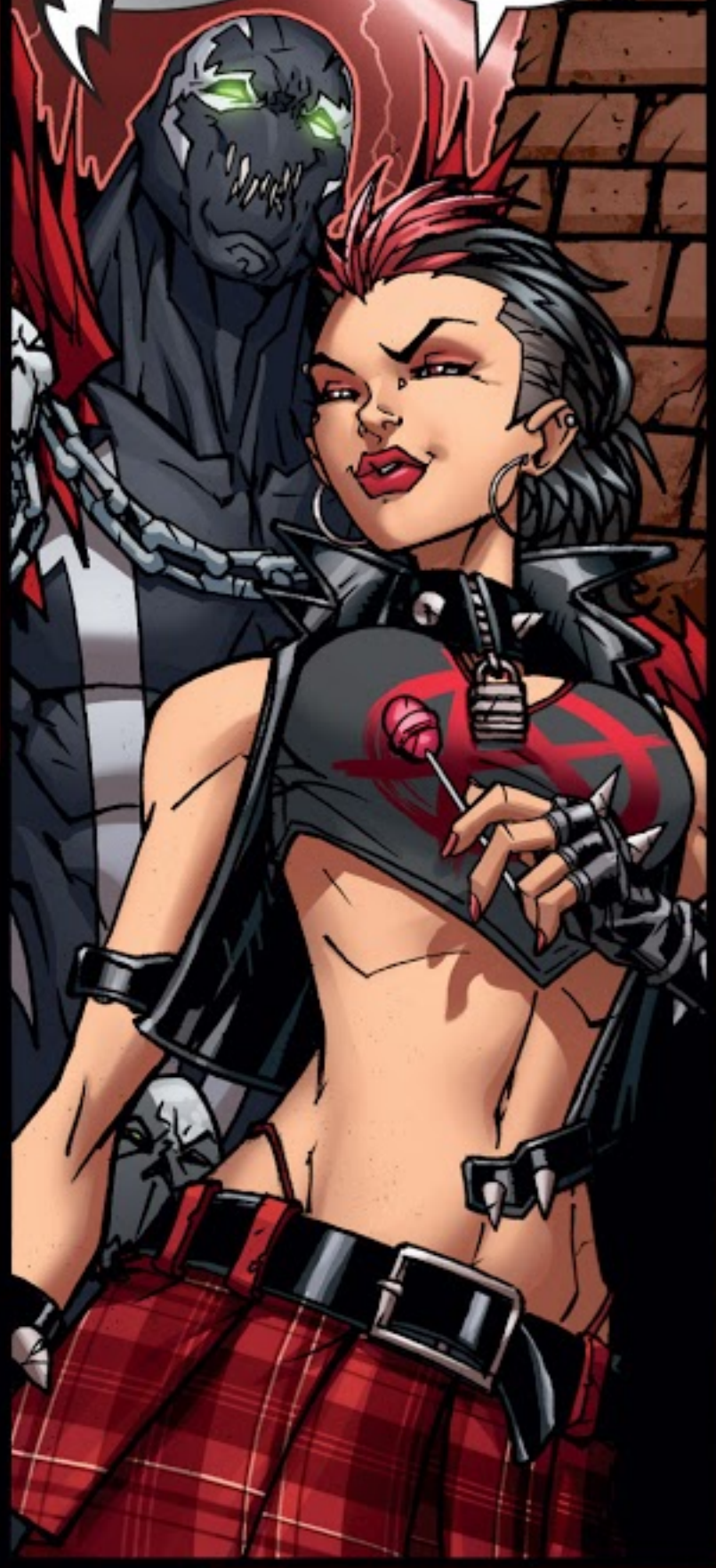
THIS IS
WHERE YOU
LIVE?

FOR
NOW.



IT'S NOT HUMANS I'M THINKING ABOUT NOW. I'VE GOT OTHER THINGS ON MY MIND.

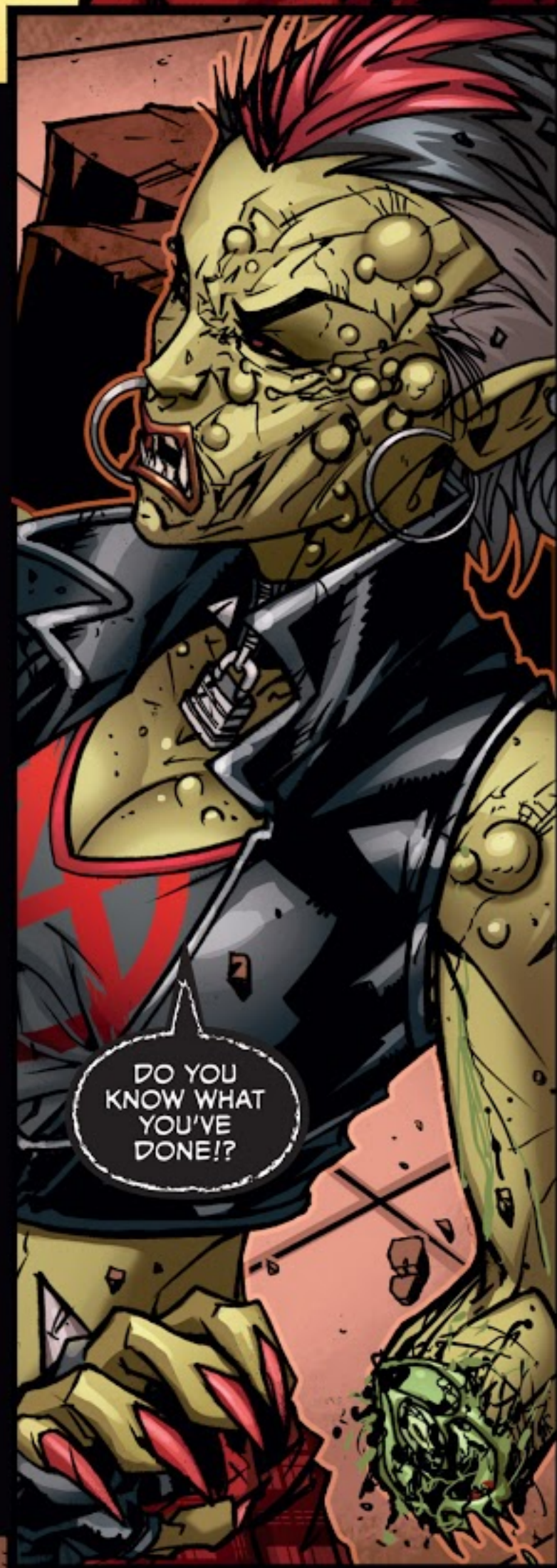
OH YEAH?...

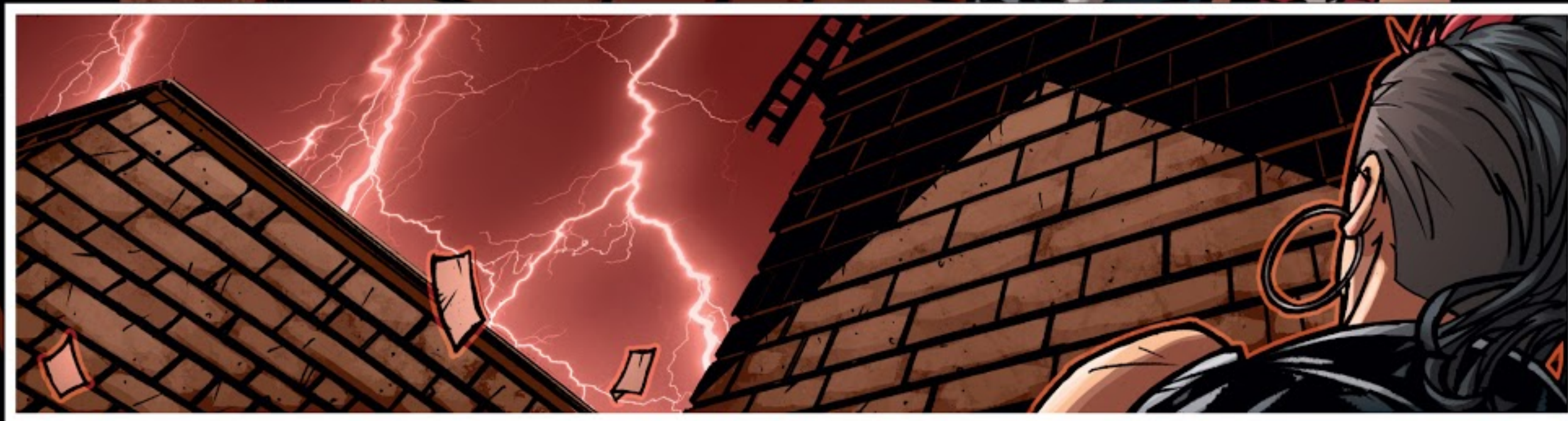


LIKE THIS!











...FOR THOSE OF US THAT KNEW HER AS A MOTHER OR WIFE--A DAUGHTER OR FRIEND, WE WILL ALL MISS HER BRIGHT PRESENCE IN OUR LIVES. FOR SHE WAS AN INSPIRATION TO ALL OF US AND WE WILL FOREVER CARRY HER IN OUR HEARTS.



LET US BOW OUR HEADS FOR A SILENT PRAYER.



WE MUST ALSO CONTINUE TO SUPPORT HER FAMILY. TERRY AND HIS THREE CHILDREN, CYAN, KATE AND JAKE, HAVE THE NOBLE TASK OF USING EXAMPLES GIVEN TO THEM BY WANDA AND USING THEM TO HELP MAKE THE WORLD A BETTER PLACE.

AND WHEN EACH OF OUR TIMES HERE ON EARTH SHALL END, WE CAN REJOICE IN KNOWING THAT IN HEAVEN WE'LL ONCE AGAIN SEE THE BELOVED WANDA BLAKE.



PLEASE-- JOIN ME NOW IN A FEW PRAYERS SELECTED BY THE FAMILY.

MINUTES LATER.

BEFORE WE
SEND HER TO
HER FINAL RESTING
PLACE, TERRY, YOU
AND YOUR FAMILY
WANTED TO PRESENT
SOMETHING.

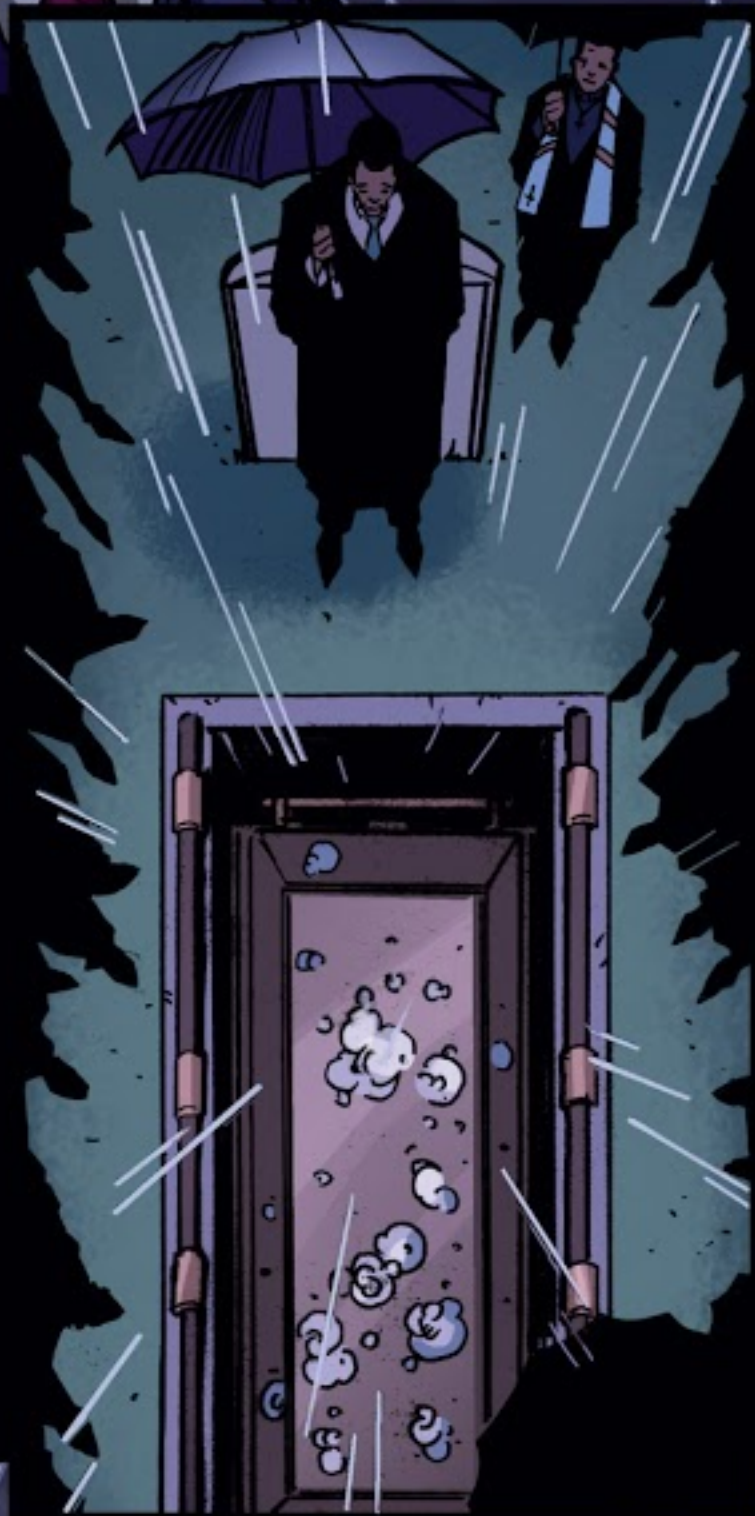
GO
AHEAD,
CYAN.

THANKS.

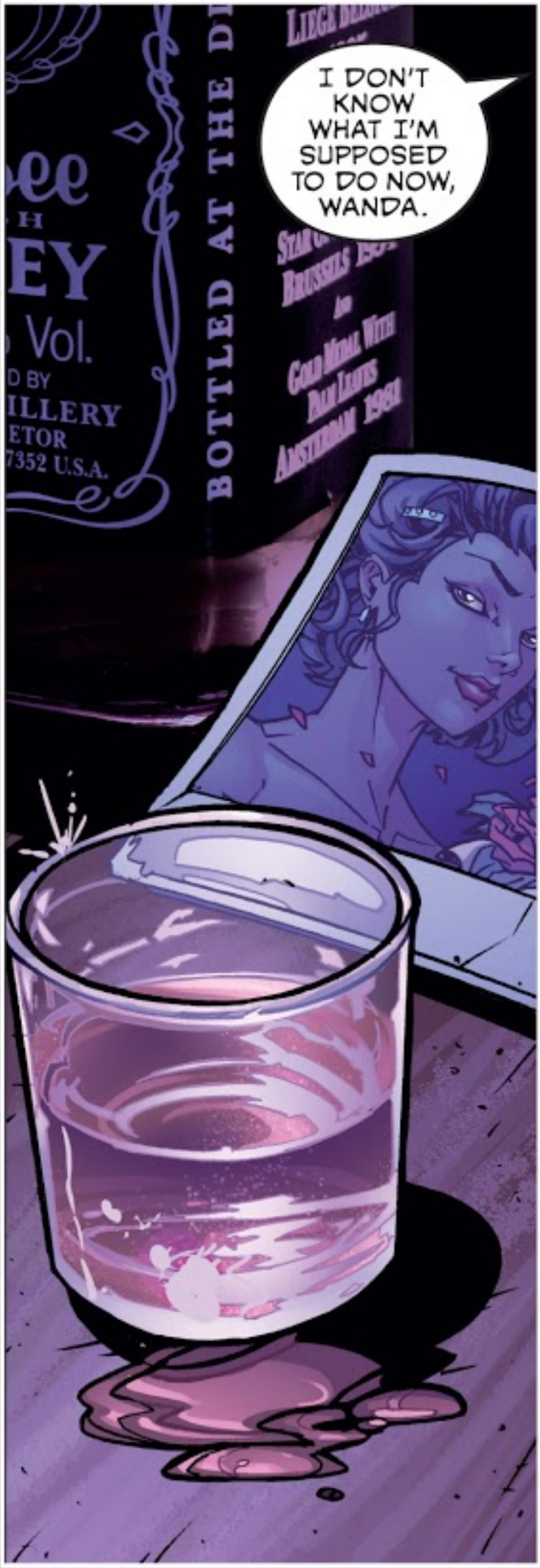


BYE...
MOM.





LATER THAT NIGHT.



I DON'T KNOW WHAT I'M SUPPOSED TO DO NOW, WANDA.



I WAS NEVER AS STRONG AS YOU.



I'M SORRY, TERRY...



...FOR YOUR
LOSS. I KNOW
HOW MUCH YOU
LOVED HER.



YOU
KNOW NOTHING
ABOUT WHAT I'M
FEELING.

OR
WHY.

NOW,
GET OUT
OF MY
HOUSE.



I WILL.
BUT I NEED
TO ASK YOU
A FEW
QUESTIONS
FIRST.

SHE WAS
MY WIFE TOO.
THAT'S WHY
I NEED
ANSWERS.

QUESTIONS?

YOU HAVE THE
GALL TO COME INTO
MY HOUSE-- UNINVITED--
SO YOU CAN INTERROGATE
ME!? IN CASE YOU
HADN'T HEARD, I JUST
BURIED MY WIFE.



*Issue 190 - Todd



DO YOU KNOW
WHAT IT'S GOING TO
BE LIKE FOR THEM TO
HAVE TO GROW UP WITHOUT
THEIR MOTHER? SHE WAS
EVERYTHING TO THEM! OR
DO YOU EVEN CARE? I BET
YOU'RE GLAD WANDA
DOESN'T GET TO SHARE A
BED WITH ME AGAIN.
THAT'S IT, ISN'T IT?



YOU
COULDN'T
STAND THAT SHE
WAS WITH ME
INSTEAD OF YOU.
THAT WE HAD KIDS
AND YOU DIDN'T!
WHY DON'T
YOU JUST
ADMIT IT.

ADMIT
YOU WERE
ALWAYS
JEALOUS.



ALWAYS.

I KNOW
YOU'RE HURTING,
TERRY... BUT I
DON'T HAVE TIME
FOR YOUR SELF-
PITY. AND NEITHER
DOES WANDA'S
SOUL.

SO, I DON'T
GIVE A SHIT WHAT YOU
THINK OF ME. BECAUSE
I'M ONLY AFTER ONE
THING. TO FIND THOSE THAT
DID THIS TO WANDA. NOW
YOU CAN EITHER GIVE THAT
INFO WILLINGLY OR I'LL
FORCE IT OUT OF YOU. THIS
ISN'T ABOUT YOU! IT'S
ABOUT WANDA.

THEY'RE
GOING TO PAY
FOR WHAT THEY
DID. *EVERY*
SINGLE ONE
OF THEM! I
PROMISE YOU
THAT.



AND I
PROMISE YOU
SOMETHING
ELSE...

THEY'LL
NEVER HURT
YOUR FAMILY
AGAIN.

WHAT'RE
YOU
DOING...?

SOMETHING
I SHOULD HAVE
DONE A LONG
TIME AGO.

THIS LIGHT...
IT'LL PROTECT
YOU FROM NOW
ON. THEY WON'T BE
ABLE TO TOUCH
YOU EVER
AGAIN.

"ALL OF YOU.

"GRANNY...

"CYAN...

"AND THE TWINS.

"IN THE MORNING YOU WON'T
EVEN REMEMBER I WAS HERE."



TO A TV
INTERVIEW
OF SOME
KIND.

WITH
WHO?

DON'T
REMEMBER
HIS
NAME.

WHAT
STATION
DOES HE
WORK
FOR?

WRRZ.

YOU
SURE
ABOUT
THAT?

WHY?
WHAT
DOES IT
MEAN?

BUT I
STILL NEED
MY ANSWER.
WHERE WAS
WANDA
GOING?

I'M
ABOUT
TO FIND
OUT.

TAKE
CARE OF
YOURSELF...
MY
FRIEND.

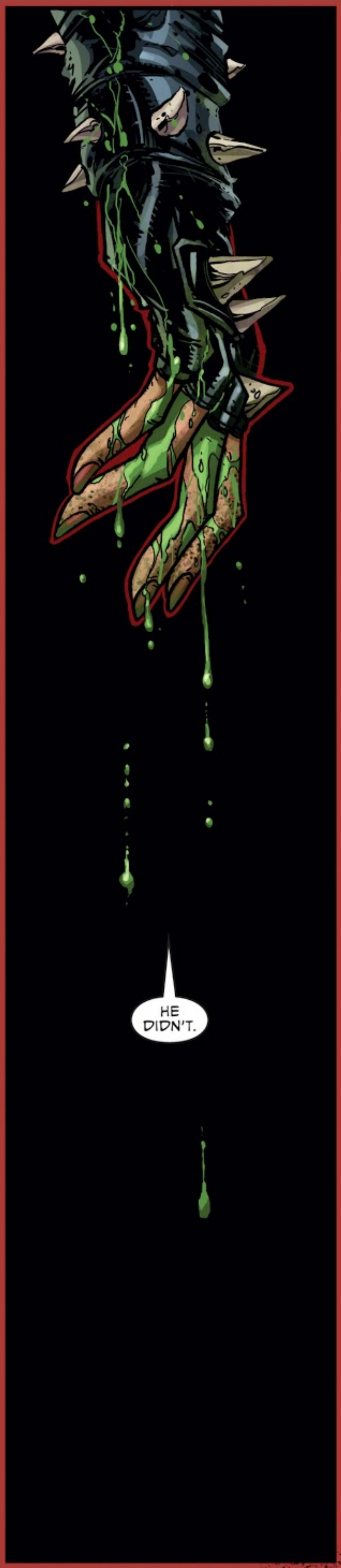
Hell.

In the deepest recesses
of 'The TUNNEL'.



BLIP

"COME. STAND
CLOSER. NOW TELL
ME...DID HE ACCEPT
THE OFFER?"



"YOU SHOWED HIM
HOW TIME WORKED?
HOW HIS FATE COULD
BE CHANGED?"



I TOLD HIM
EVERYTHING
YOU WANTED
ME TO.

"AND HE CHOSE
NOT TO BE WITH
HIS WIFE. OR TO
BE HUMAN?"

HE
WANTED
NEITHER.

"DID HE
HURT YOU?"

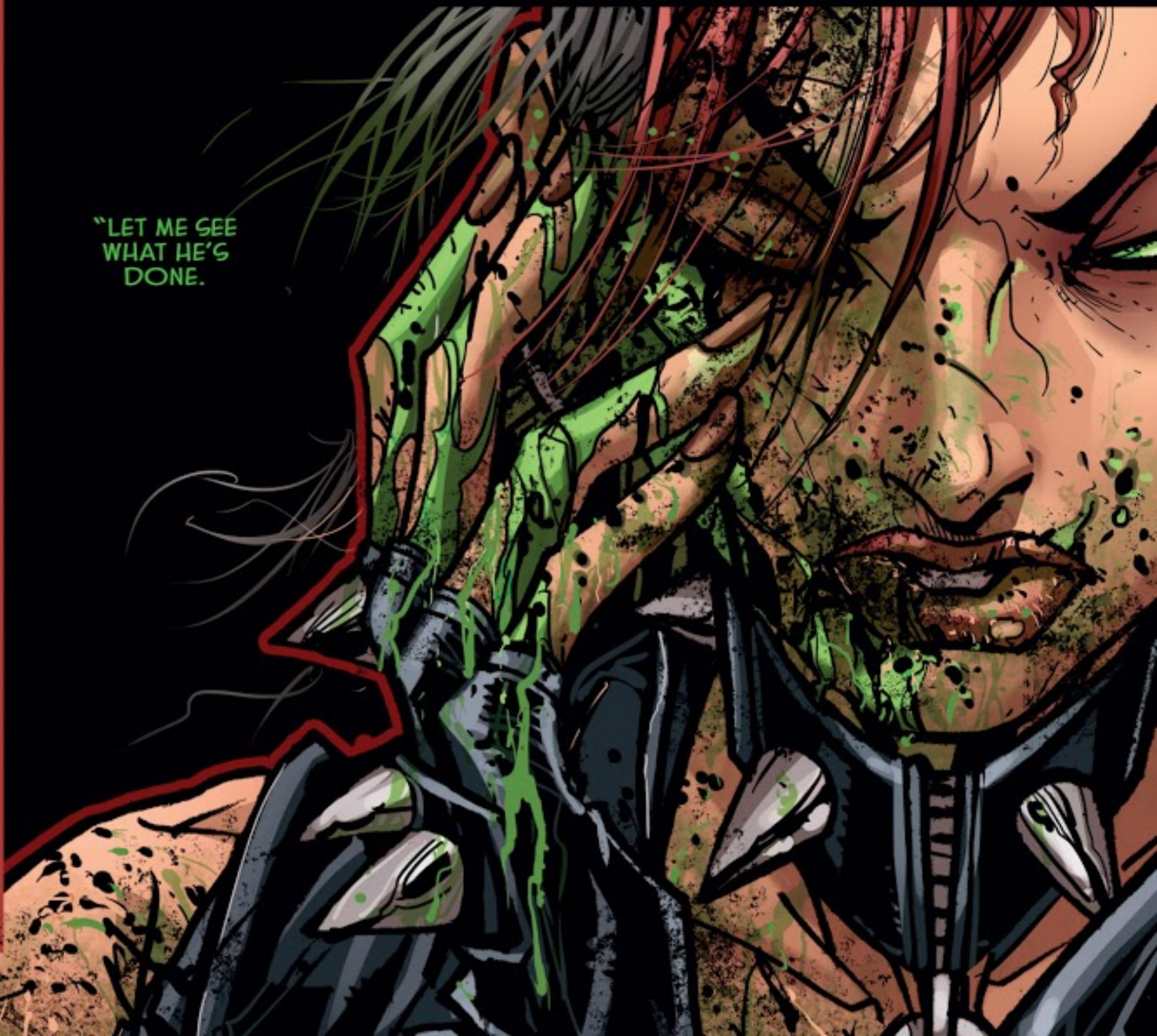
I'LL
HEAL.

"DID HE
HURT
YOU?!"

YES. AND HE
TOOK AWAY MY
ABILITY TO SHIFT.
I CAN'T CHANGE
OUT OF THIS
HUMAN FORM.

HE
DIDN'T.

"LET ME SEE
WHAT HE'S
DONE."



WHY DO
YOU LOOK
AWAY? THERE'S
SOMETHING ELSE.
WHAT IS IT?

HE'S
COMING
FOR
YOU.

AND WHEN
HE DOES--
HE PLANS TO
**KILL
YOU!**



NEXT ISSUE: **SPAWN** gets MORE pieces to the PUZZLE

SPAWN

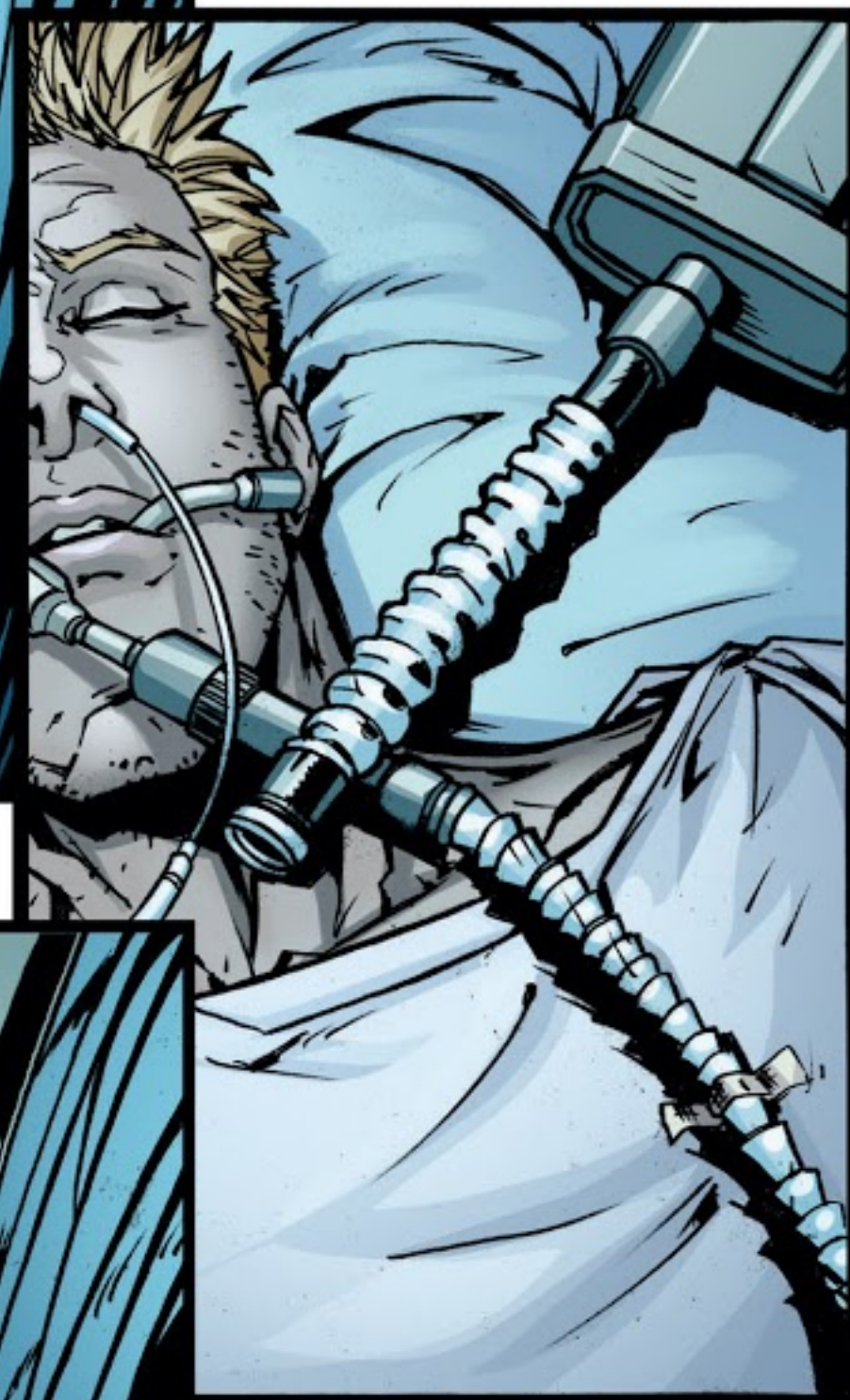
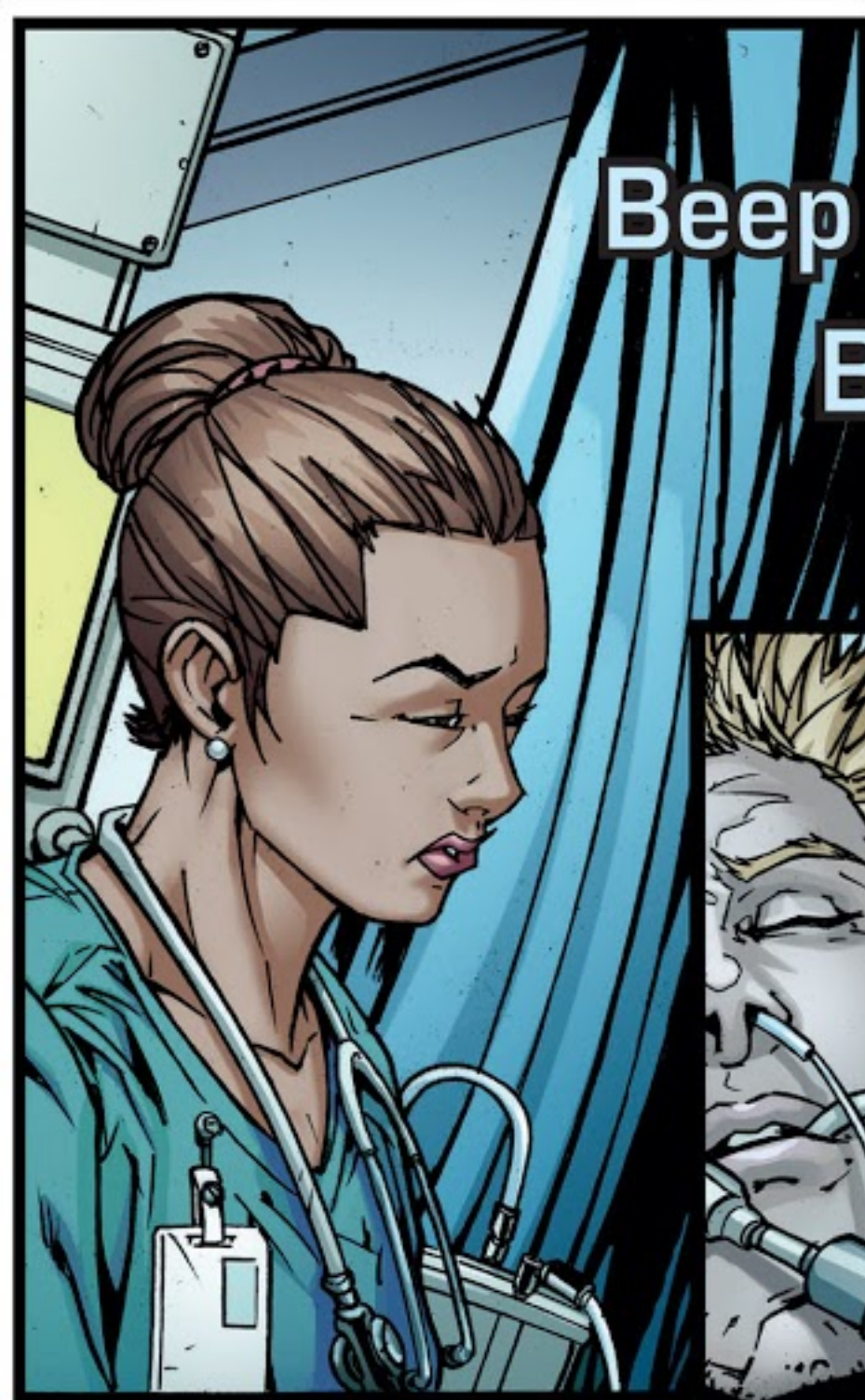


JonBoy
Laura

Beep

Beep

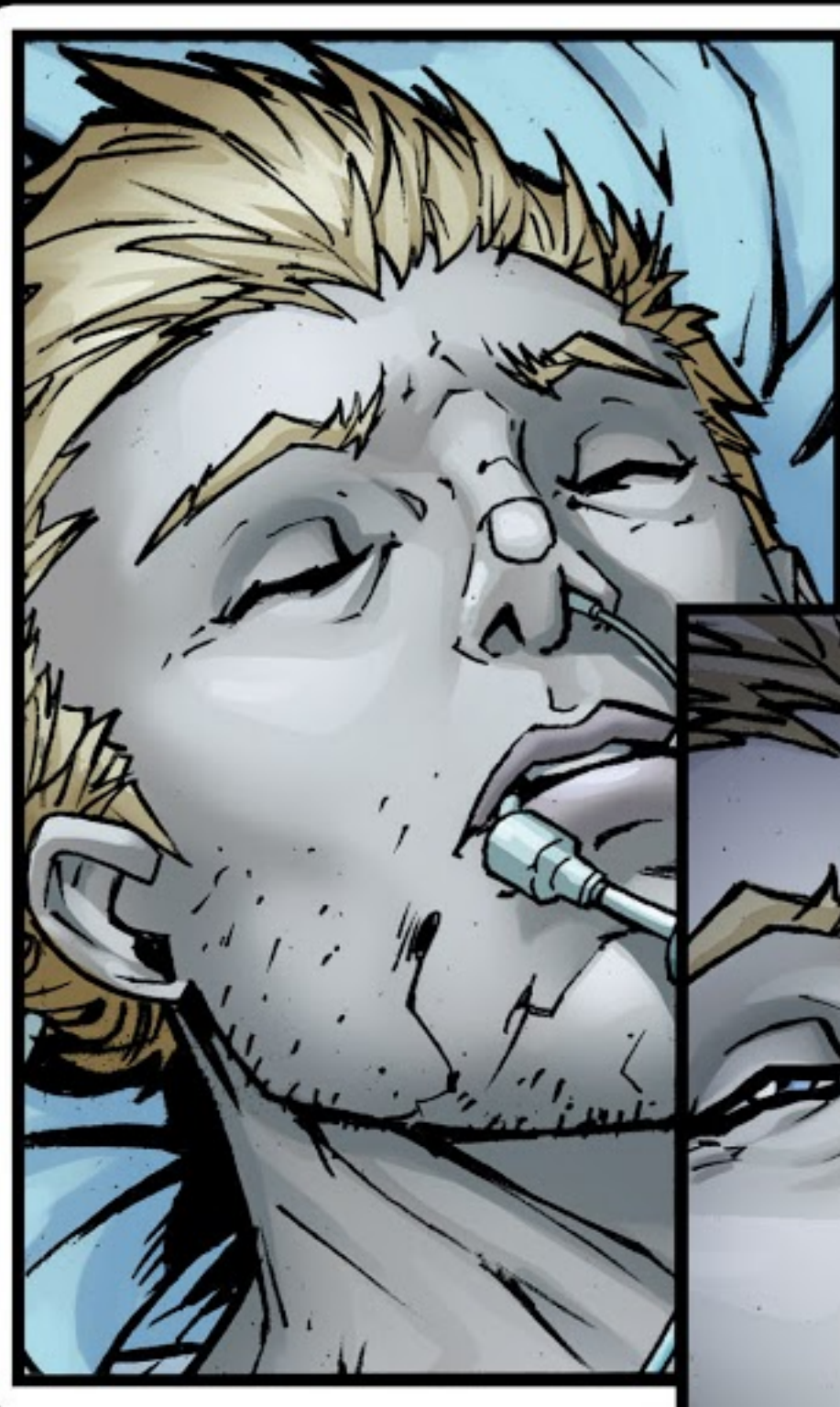
Beep Beep



DOWNING,
JIM
RM. 923

"...AS MENTIONED
EARLIER, WE WANTED
TO BRING YOU AN
UPDATE ON THE
CURRENT CONDITION
OF JIM DOWNING."





"THE UNFORTUNATE AFTERMATH OF NEW YORK CITY'S MYSTERIOUS ATTACK BY BILLIONS OF INSECTS NOT ONLY CAUSED DAMAGE TO THOUSANDS OF BUILDINGS, BUT TOOK ITS TOLL ON THE PEOPLE OF THE CITY AS WELL.*

*See issue 250 - Todd



"MR. DOWNING WAS ONE OF THEM. AS MOST OF YOU KNOW, HE HAD APPEARED SEEMINGLY OUT OF NOWHERE. FOR A TIME HE GAVE GREAT HOPE TO THOSE AROUND THE WORLD LOOKING FOR A WAY TO CURE THE AFFLICTIONS MEDICAL SCIENCE COULD NOT.

"HE WAS, AS SOME CALLED HIM, A MODERN DAY MESSIAH.

"HIS NEWLY ANNOUNCED FOUNDATION WAS TO BE AT THE CENTER WHERE DOWNING WOULD USE THOSE HEALING POWERS TO HELP OTHERS..."



CNR



"...BUT AS REPORTED LAST WEEK, HIS BODY WAS RECOVERED, ALONG WITH DOZENS OF OTHERS BY THE NATIONAL GUARD. THOUGH HE DIDN'T APPEAR TO HAVE ANY LIFE THREATENING INJURIES, HE HAD ONCE AGAIN LAPSED INTO A COMA. VIEWERS WILL RECALL THAT IT WAS ONLY A FEW MONTHS AGO THAT MR. DOWNING CAME ONTO THE PUBLIC STAGE AFTER WAKING FROM A LONG STANDING COMA. AT THAT POINT HE HAD NO KNOWN IDENTITY AND NO IDENTIFIABLE PAST. NO ONE FROM ANY GOVERNMENT OR SOCIAL AGENCY, THEN OR SINCE, COULD TELL US WHERE HE CAME FROM.

WITH THIS NEW DEVELOPMENT, WE MAY NEVER HAVE ANY ANSWERS AS TO WHO HE REALLY IS AND WHERE THOSE POWERS CAME FROM. DOCTORS CAN ONLY SAY THAT THERE IS NO WAY OF KNOWING WHEN HE WILL AWAKEN ONCE MORE."



"THE SADDEST PART OF THIS SITUATION IS THE DISAPPOINTMENT FELT BY COUNTLESS DESPERATE PEOPLE THE WORLD OVER. MR. DOWNING HAD GIVEN HOPE TO THOSE WHO HAD BEEN PRAYING THAT THEY, OR THEIR LOVED ONES, WOULD SOMEHOW BE 'SAVED' BY HIS HEALING ABILITIES. CONSTRUCTION HAS STOPPED ON THE FACILITY THAT WAS TO HOUSE HIS NEW FOUNDATION. BILLIONAIRE INDUSTRIALIST MATTHEW RAMUS, WHO WAS FUNDING THE ENDEAVOR, SAID HE WILL DO EVERYTHING HE CAN TO FIND HELP FOR THOSE MOST IN NEED. AT THE SAME TIME, HE PROMISED TO GET MR. DOWNING THE BEST DOCTORS MONEY CAN BUY.

CRITICS ARE SUGGESTING ALL OF THIS MAY HAVE JUST BEEN A CLEVER PLOY BY MR. RAMUS TO LIFT PUBLIC OPINION TOWARD HIS COMPANY'S BRANDS. SOME WALL STREET INSIDERS ARE SUGGESTING THAT HE MAY HAVE BEEN USING DOWNING AS A SMOKE-SCREEN WHILE SEVERAL OF HIS GLOBAL HOLDINGS FACE LEGAL BATTLES OVER THEIR ENVIRONMENTAL LAPSES."



7

WRRZ

"**LOOK...** I GET IT! HONESTLY, I DO.

YOU'RE PUPPETS. ALWAYS HAVE BEEN, ALWAYS WILL BE. YOU DON'T REALLY CARE THAT IT WAS NEVER DEFINITELY PROVED THAT MR. DOWNING COULD ACTUALLY DO HIS 'HEALING THING' WHENEVER HE WANTED. **ALL YOU SUCKERS** JUST TOOK HIS WORD FOR IT! **YOU'RE PATHETIC!**

HE WAS A CON MAN. A SNAKE OIL SALESMAN. AND INSTEAD OF US QUESTIONING THE VIABILITY OF WHAT HE COULD OR COULDN'T DO... WE MADE HIM A MEDIA DARLING. A SEX SYMBOL. HELL, YOU EVEN STARTED A WEBSITE CALLING HIM THE "**SECOND COMING**." THAT'S HOW **DESPERATE AND BROKEN** OUR COUNTRY HAS BECOME! THAT WE PUT ALL OUR FAITH INTO A MAN WHO **COULDN'T EVEN TELL US** WHO HE WAS! SO, SEND ME YOUR NASTY EMAILS IF YOU WANT, BUT I'M GLAD HE'S IN A COMA! I GUESS YOU'RE ALL GOING TO HAVE TO FIND ANOTHER **FRAUD** TO GIVE MEANING TO YOUR **RIDICULOUS LIVES!**"



GREAT SHOW, BARRY. LOTS OF ENERGY TONIGHT.

OKAY, EVERYONE, THAT'S A WRAP!

WRRZ 7



IT'S NOT ENERGY! IT'S THE TRUTH. THAT'S WHAT MAKES IT EASY.

TELL THE STAFF TO LEAVE ME ALONE FOR A FEW HOURS. I NEED TO MAKE SOME PHONE CALLS.



WANDA BLAKE.

WHAT DID YOU DEMONS TO DO TO HER?



UH?

I NEVER TOUCHED HER!



THEN
WHO
DID?

WAS
IT **BELIAL**?
DID HE GIVE
THE ORDERS?
OR WAS IT
SOMEONE
ELSE?

THEY'LL
KILL ME
IF I...

I'LL
KILL YOU
IF YOU
DON'T.

TELL ME
WHERE
THEY TOOK
HER.

**'THE
TUNNEL!'**
THEY SAID THEY
WERE GOING TO
TORTURE HER IN THE
TUNNEL... AFTER
THEY KILLED
HER.



STRANGE...



...THE FASCINATION HUMANS HAVE WITH THINGS THEY KNOW NOTHING ABOUT. IT MUST BE THE VISUALS THEY'RE ATTRACTED TO.

THOUGH I DON'T UNDERSTAND WHAT'S SO SPECIAL ABOUT THIS GUY'S ART. AND THESE SILLY CHARACTERS. IT DOESN'T MAKE ANY SENSE.

REALLY, A GUY WITH SPIDER POWERS?





NO.
IT
CAN'T.

'THE
TUNNEL.'
WHERE IS IT
AND HOW
DO I GET
TO IT?



THE
TUNNEL!?
YOU WANT TO
GO TO THE
TUNNEL?

DO YOU
EVEN KNOW
WHAT THAT IS?
IF YOU DID, YOU
WOULDN'T BE
ASKING ME
ABOUT IT.



WHY?
BECAUSE
I'LL BE
AFRAID?

I DON'T GIVE
A SHIT WHAT
SATAN OR YOUR
GOD HAVE CREATED
TO PROTECT THEMSELVES.
IF YOU HAVEN'T FIGURED
IT OUT-- '**FEAR**'
ISN'T SOMETHING I
ACKNOWLEDGE ANY-
MORE. NOW... YOU
GOING TO HELP
ME OR NOT?

I'M
NOT THE
BAD GUY
HERE, AL.
TAKE IT
EASY.



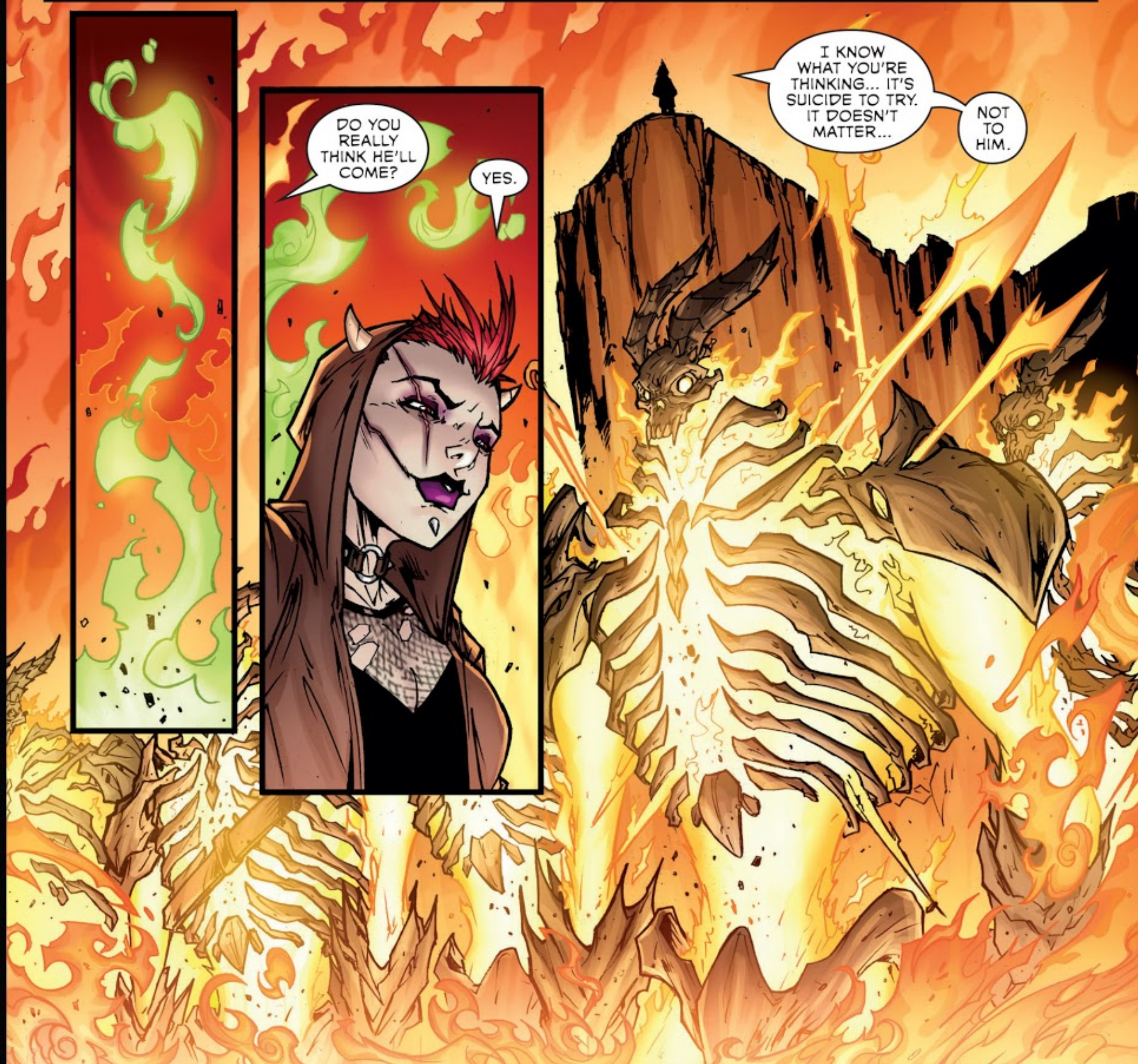
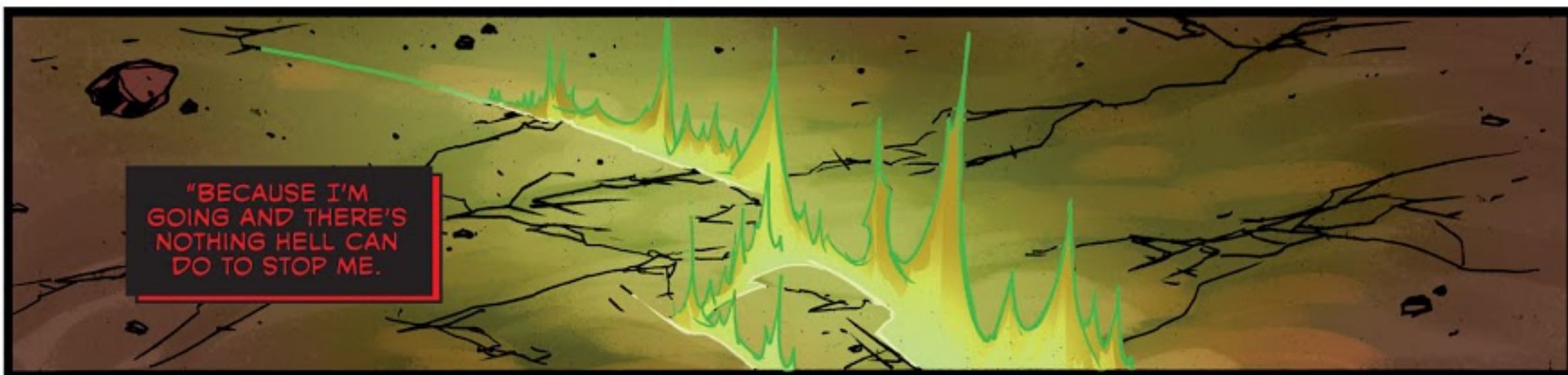
SO YOU
KEEP SAYING.
THEN SHOW
ME AND STOP
TALKING
ABOUT IT.

LISTEN TO
ME. YOU CAN'T GET THERE
ON YOUR OWN. IT'S IMPOSSIBLE
FOR SOMEONE WHO WAS HUMAN
TO GET THERE. YOU NEED TWO KEYS
TO UNLOCK THE ENTRANCE. ONE
HAS TO BE AN ANGEL. THE OTHER,
A DEMON. AND BOTH NEED TO
COME WILLINGLY.

I CAN BE
ONE OF YOUR
KEYS. BUT EVEN IF
WE COULD GET PAST
THE FIRST BARRIER...
IT'S A MAZE. A BLACK,
INFINITE MAZE TO
GET TO THE TUNNEL
ITSELF. WE COULD
GET LOST FOR A
CENTURY IN
THERE.

I DON'T
PLAN ON
DOING
THAT...







THEN WE'LL
DO TO HIM WHAT
WE'VE DONE TO
ALL THE OTHERS
THAT TRIED.

THAT'S WHAT
I'M COUNTING ON.
WHY YOU WERE
PICKED FOR THIS
MISSION.

YOU'VE
NEVER FAILED
TO STOP ANY
INTRUDER. AND OUR
LORD HAS NEVER
NEEDED TO BE
BOtherED BY ANY
BREACH.

AND HE
WON'T THIS
TIME,
EITHER.

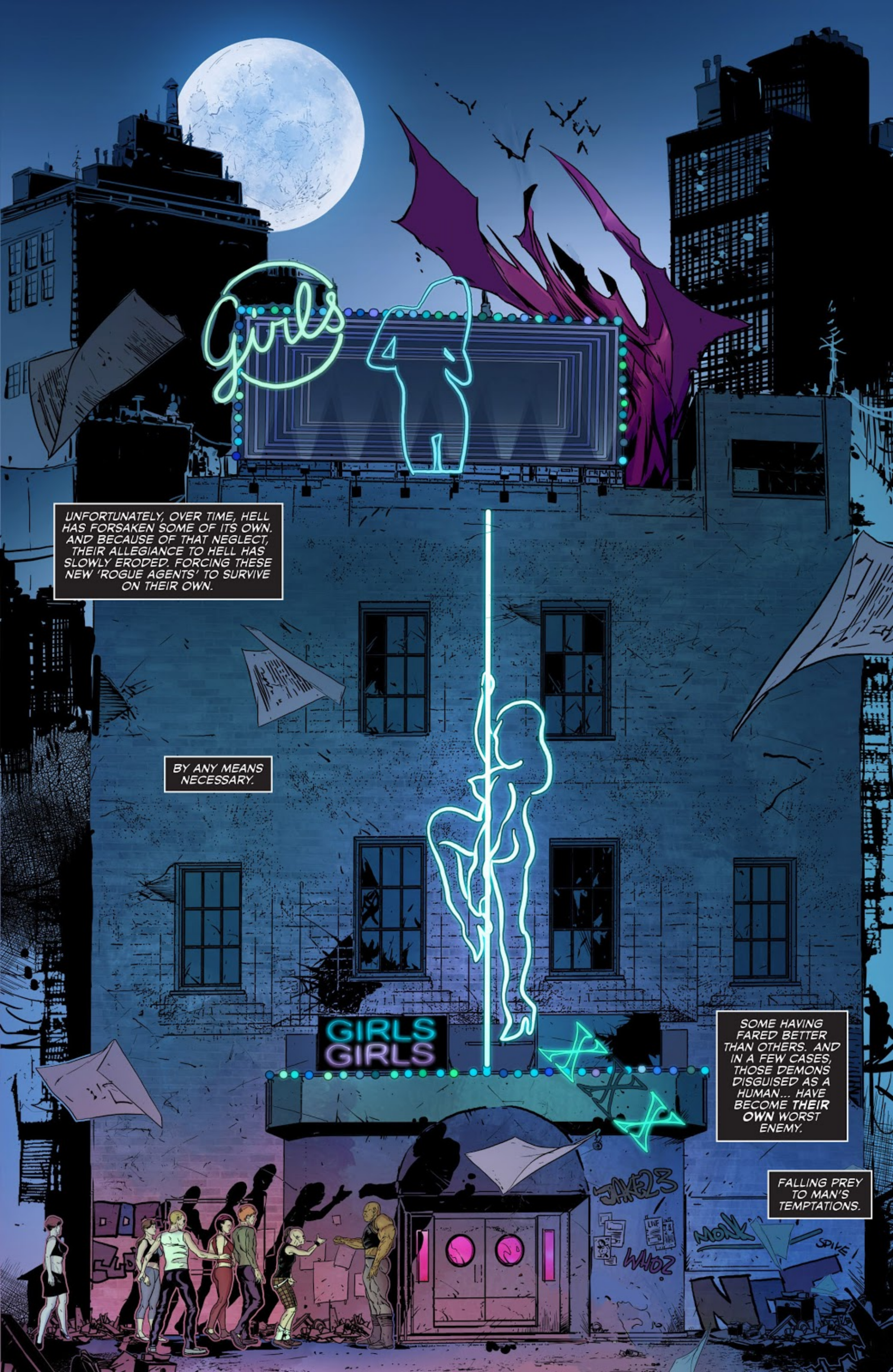
DO YOU
WANT HIM
TAKEN
PRISONER?

SORT
OF.

SATAN
WANTS THE
COSTUME. THAT'S
ALL. CAPTURE THAT
AND HE DOESN'T
CARE WHAT YOU
DO TO THE
HUMAN.

AND JUST
LIKE HE DID WHEN
HE HEALED ME FROM
MY INJURIES, HE'LL
REWARD YOU FOR
YOUR EFFORTS. YOU
AND YOUR ENTIRE
ARMY.

YOU'LL ALL
BASK IN THE
GLOW OF OUR
MASTER'S
GRATITUDE.



UNFORTUNATELY, OVER TIME, HELL HAS FORSAKEN SOME OF ITS OWN. AND BECAUSE OF THAT NEGLECT, THEIR ALLEGIANCE TO HELL HAS SLOWLY ERODED. FORCING THESE NEW 'ROGUE AGENTS' TO SURVIVE ON THEIR OWN.

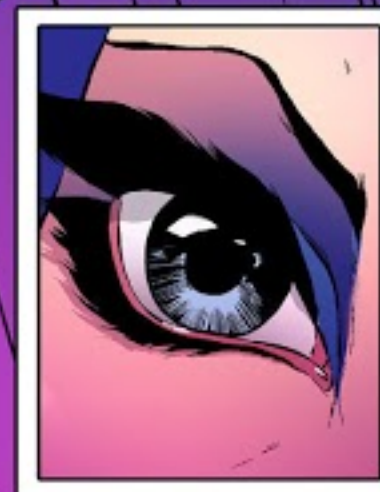
BY ANY MEANS NECESSARY.

SOME HAVING FARED BETTER THAN OTHERS. AND IN A FEW CASES, THOSE DEMONS DISGUISED AS A HUMAN... HAVE BECOME THEIR OWN WORST ENEMY.

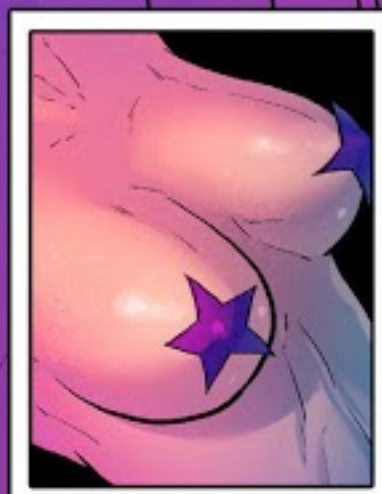
FALLING PREY TO MAN'S TEMPTATIONS.



BUT IN TIME, THOSE
FORSAKEN AGENTS WILL
ULTIMATELY SHOW THE
WORLD IF THEIR PAIN
WAS REAL...



...OR IF IT WAS JUST
SOME FANTASY. AN ACT
TO CONVINCE THE WORLD
THEY APPEARED WEAK.



HEY,
BIG FELLA,
LOOKING'S FREE.
SO HOW ABOUT
YOU BUY US A
DRINK?



I'M NOT
THIRSTY.

EVER.



FINE...
HAVE IT
YOUR
WAY.







THAT'S
TOO BAD.
I'M NOT
GIVING
YOU A
CHOICE.

SIMMONS?!

JEEZ!...
HOW'D
YOU...?

HOW'D I
REGENERATE
MY HEADLESS
CORPSE? THE
CORPSE YOU
HID IN THE
ALLEYS?

MAYBE
I'LL TELL YOU
ANOTHER DAY.
THAT'S NOT WHY I'M
HERE. SEE, I NEED TO
EXTRACT A LITTLE INFO
AND YOU'RE JUST THE
GUY I'M LOOKING
FOR. NOW SCOOT
YOUR FAT ASS
OVER.



YOU
DON'T
SCARE
ME.

I SHOULD.
'CAUSE I'VE
BEEN DOING MY
HOMEWORK AND
I HEAR YOU CAN'T
SHAPE SHIFT ANY-
MORE. THAT'S
A SHAME.

OH, YEAH?
I BET THAT'S
BREAKING
YOUR HEART.



DID YOU TELL DOWNING HOW TO DO THAT TO ME, OR DID HE DO THAT ALL BY HIMSELF?

DOWNING WAS HIS OWN MAN. I'M SURE HE DID WHAT HE NEEDED TO.

BUT LET ME ASK YOU--WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT 'THE TUNNEL?'



WHY? YOU'RE NOT DUMB ENOUGH TO THINK YOU CAN GET THERE, ARE YOU? THOUGH, IF YOU DID, YOU'D BE DOING ME A FAVOR SINCE I'D NEVER SEE YOU AGAIN.



SO... WHAT'S OUR NEXT TOPIC?

WE'RE STILL ON IT. 'THE TUNNEL', I NEED TO GET THERE. FAST. I'M BETTING YOU CAN HELP ME WITH THAT.

MAYBE. WHAT'S YOUR RUSH?

I WANT TO KILL SATAN. THEN STOP GOD FROM MESSING WITH US.

YOU'RE GOING TO TAKE THEM BOTH ON?

YEP.

WHY DIDN'T YOU SAY THAT IN THE FIRST PLACE? LET'S GET OUT OF HERE.



WATCH IT, OLD MAN!



I'LL WATCH MYSELF ALL RIGHT.

A REAR DOOR GIVES THEM THEIR PRIVACY.

NOW WHAT?

I NEED YOU TO TURN INTO SPAWN. AND DON'T ASK WHY. **JUST DO IT!**

THE PROBLEM WITH YOU SPAWNS IS YOU'RE **STUPID!** YOU ALWAYS HAVE BEEN. EVEN WHEN THINGS ARE RIGHT IN FRONT OF YOU... YOU CAN'T FIGURE IT OUT.

I DON'T HAVE TIME FOR YOUR RANTS. I JUST WANT TO KNOW HOW TO GET TO THE TUNNEL.

YOU ALREADY KNOW HOW TO GET THERE. YOU ALWAYS HAVE.

I'M LOSING MY PATIENCE, CLOWN!

RIGHT THERE! THE WHITE MARK-- ON YOUR CHEST. WHAT DO YOU THINK THAT IS?

IT'S A MAP. A MAP THAT LEADS YOU STRAIGHT TO SATAN HIMSELF. FOLLOW THAT ROUTE AND EVENTUALLY YOU'LL GET WHERE YOU WANT.





"BUT TO GET THERE YOU HAVE TO GO THROUGH A 'DEAD ZONE'... AND YOU NEED AN ESCORT FROM BOTH HEAVEN AND HELL. A HALF-BREED LIKE YOU CAN'T DO IT ALONE."



I'M TALKING TRUE HELL-BORN. THEN YOU'LL NEED TO FIND A HEAVEN-BORN ESCORT. AND I SURE AS SHIT DON'T KNOW WHERE TO FIND ONE OF THOSE.

LET ME WORRY ABOUT THAT. BUT YOU'RE GOING TO BE MY HELL PIECE.

WHAT!?

I'M ASSUMING I DON'T HAVE A CHOICE. SO TELL ME... WHAT'S IN IT FOR ME?



I'LL GIVE YOU ENOUGH POWER TO SHAPE SHIFT AGAIN. IN THE MEANTIME, I'LL BE BACK IN AN HOUR.



AS THE NIGHT AIR GROWS FRIGID, THE CLOWN IS MESMERIZED BY ONE THOUGHT ONLY.

More power...

...I WAS
HOPING
YOU'D
**SAY
THAT!**



NEXT: into the **ABYSS...** towards **'THE TUNNEL'**

VOYAGE TO THE CENTER OF HELL!

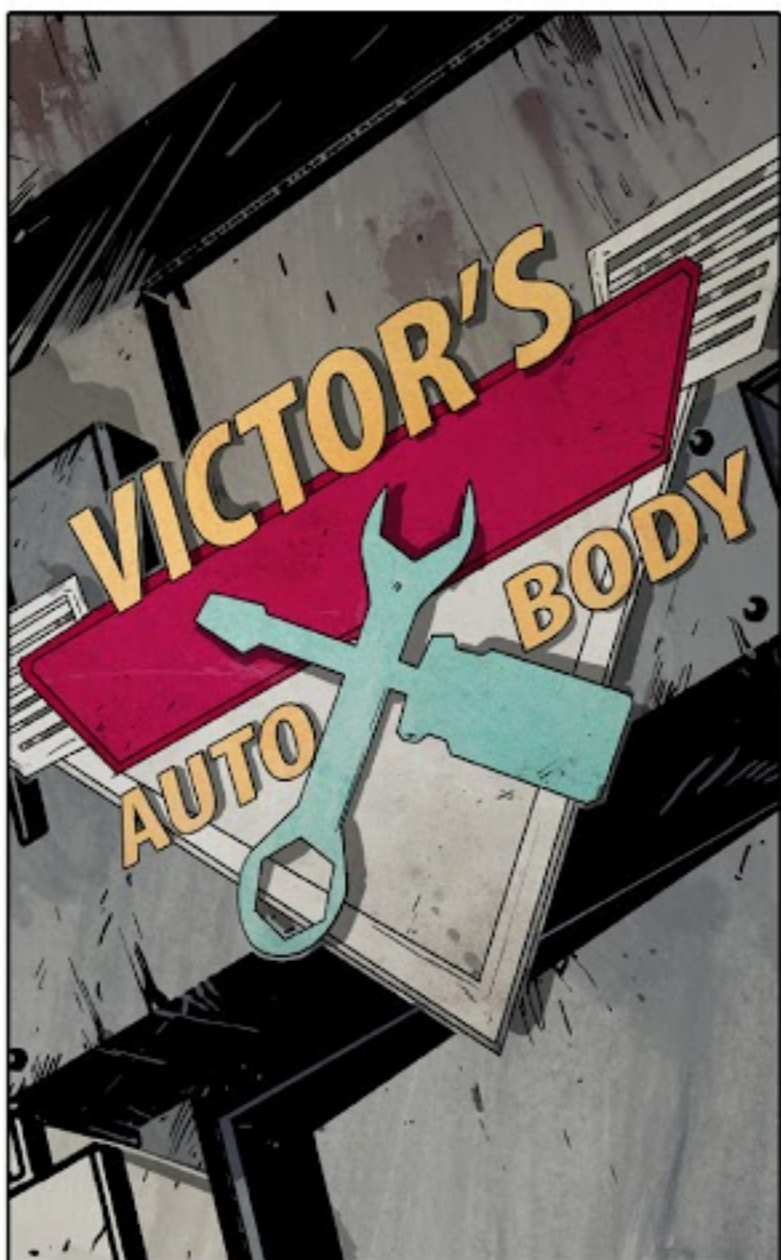
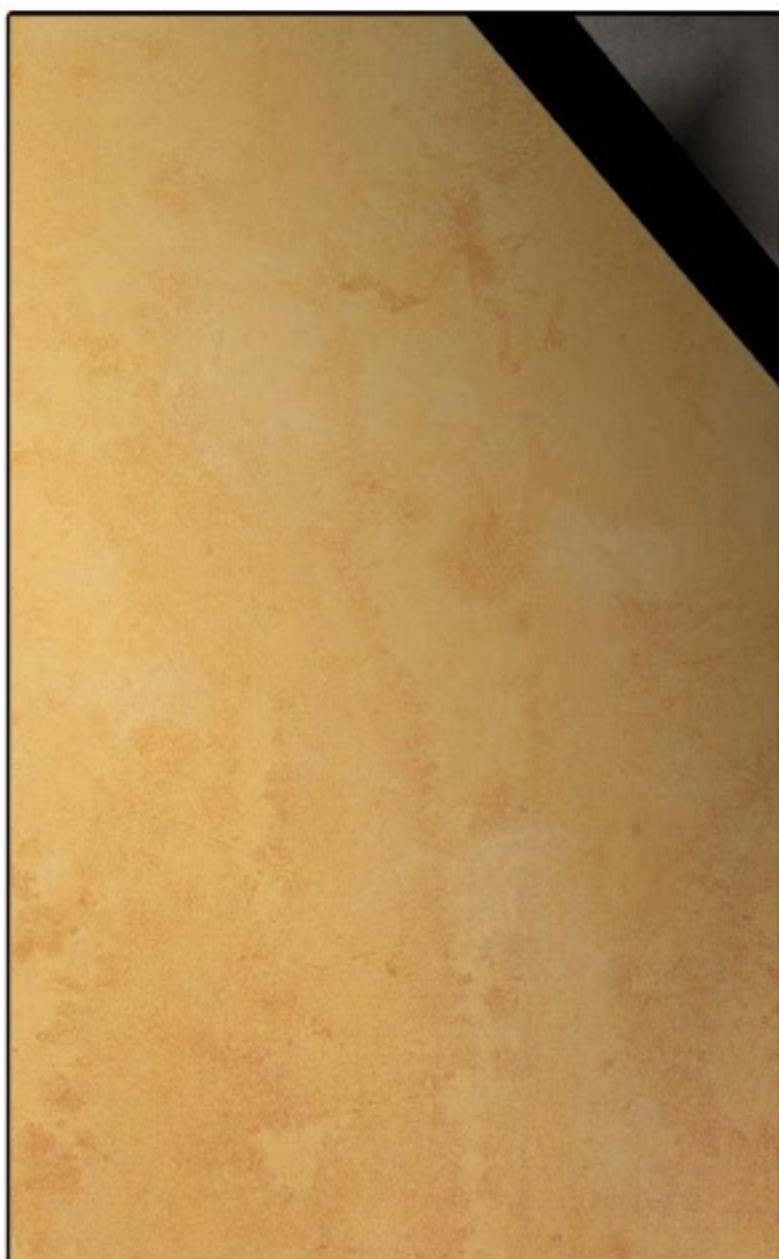
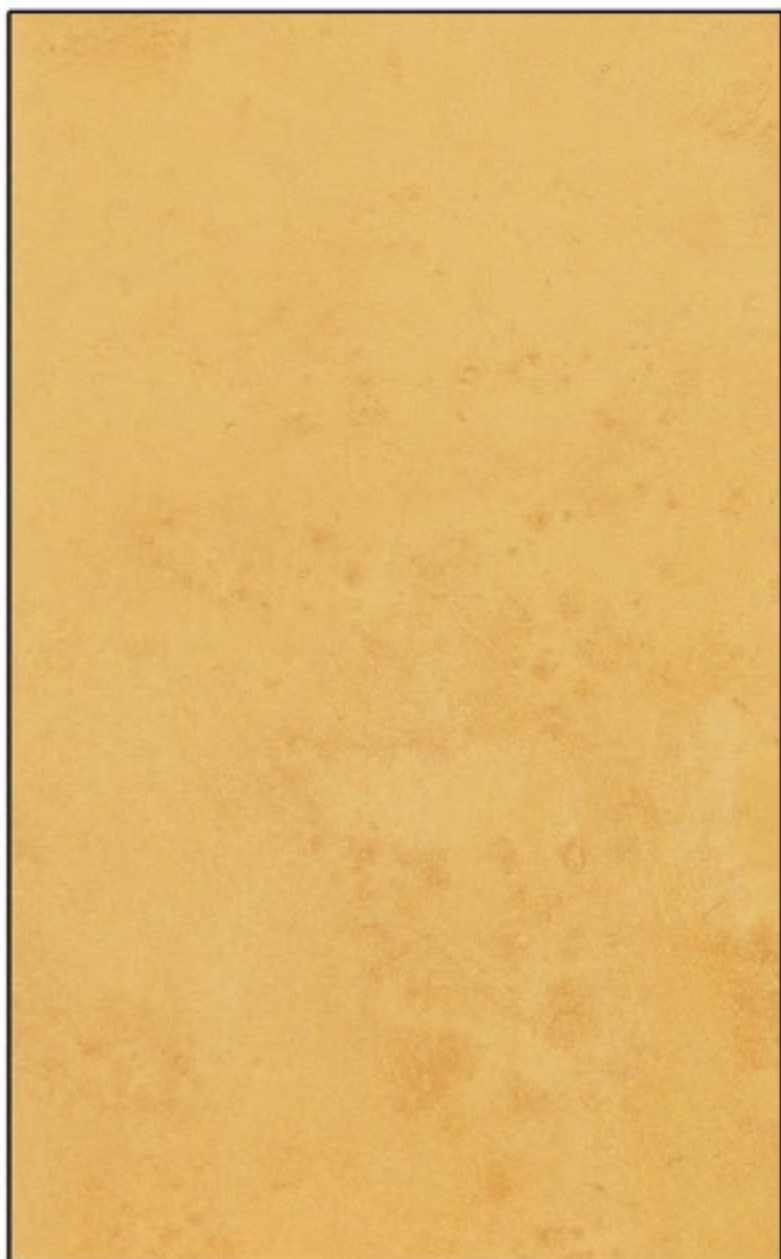
image

257

DIGITAL
EDITION

SPAWN





"SHE NEVER
HAD A
CHANCE.

"NEVER."



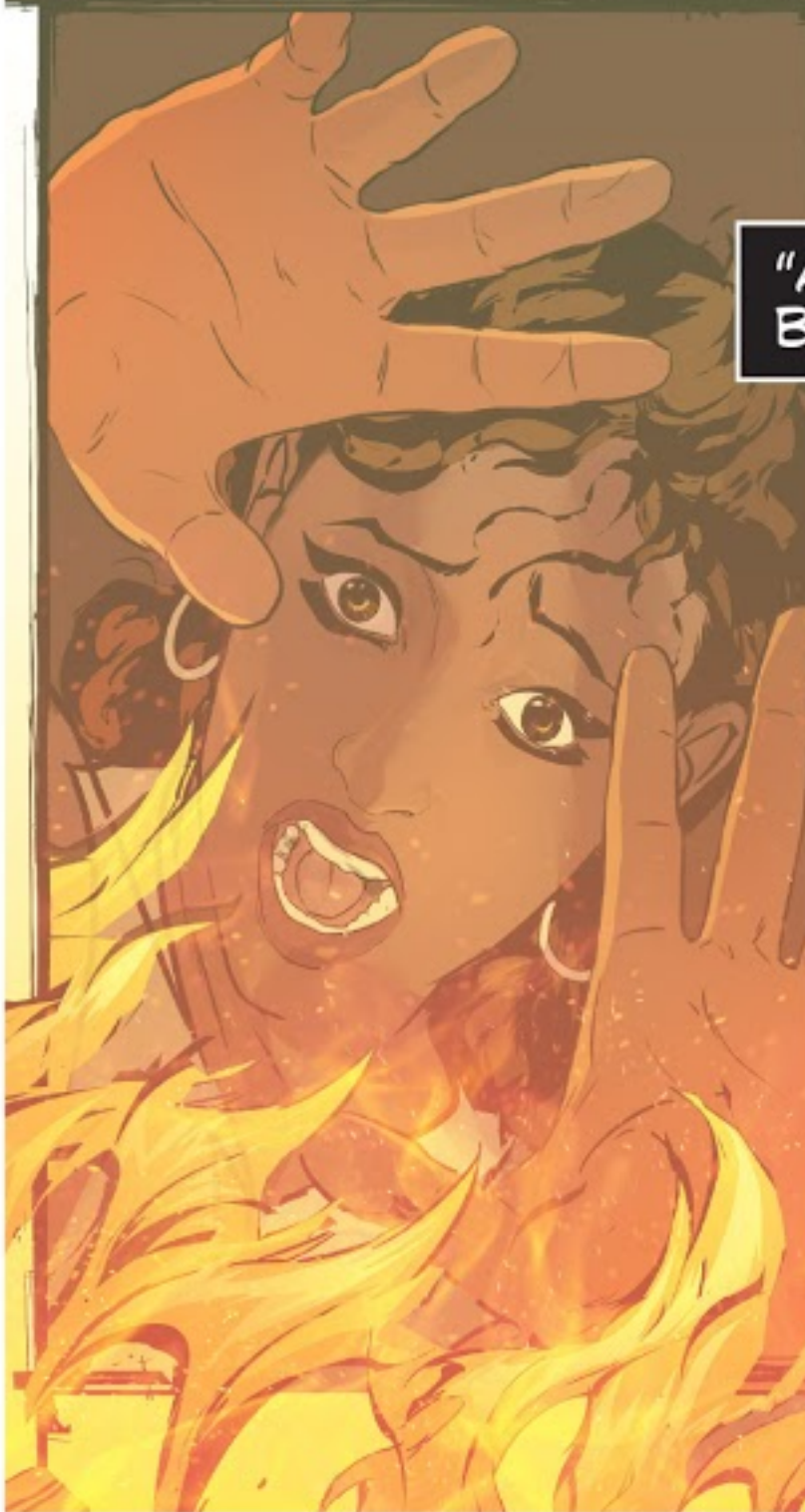


"INSTEAD THEY
JUST WATCHED..."



"...AND LET HER
SCREAM AND BURN..."







"UNTIL THE
FLAMES TORE
HER APART."



AL?--
WE NEED
TO GO. WE
SHOULDN'T
BE HERE.



YOU'RE
WRONG.
THIS IS
EXACTLY
WHERE I
NEED TO
BE.

THOSE
SIRENS. THEY'RE
HEADED THIS
WAY. YOU NEED TO
STOP TORTURING
YOURSELF LIKE
THIS.
PLEASE.



FREEZE!
PUT YOUR HANDS
WHERE WE...?

WHERE'D
THEY GO!?



Hours later.



WOW.



IT'S COOLER THAN I THOUGHT.

NO WONDER HE ACTS LIKE SUCH A BAD-ASS. I WOULD TOO, IF THIS WAS MINE.

BOO!

UH...!?

YOU ALWAYS TALK TO YOURSELF LIKE THAT?



OR DO YOU
DO IT BECAUSE
YOU DON'T HAVE
ANY FRIENDS?

I'D LEAVE
RIGHT NOW IF
I WERE YOU,
CLOWN.

CAN'T.
I'M WAITING
FOR A
FRIEND.

NOT
HERE YOU
AREN'T.

IS THAT
HIS
THRONE?

WHAT...?

THE THING
YOU'RE SITTING
ON. THAT'S
HIS THRONE,
RIGHT?

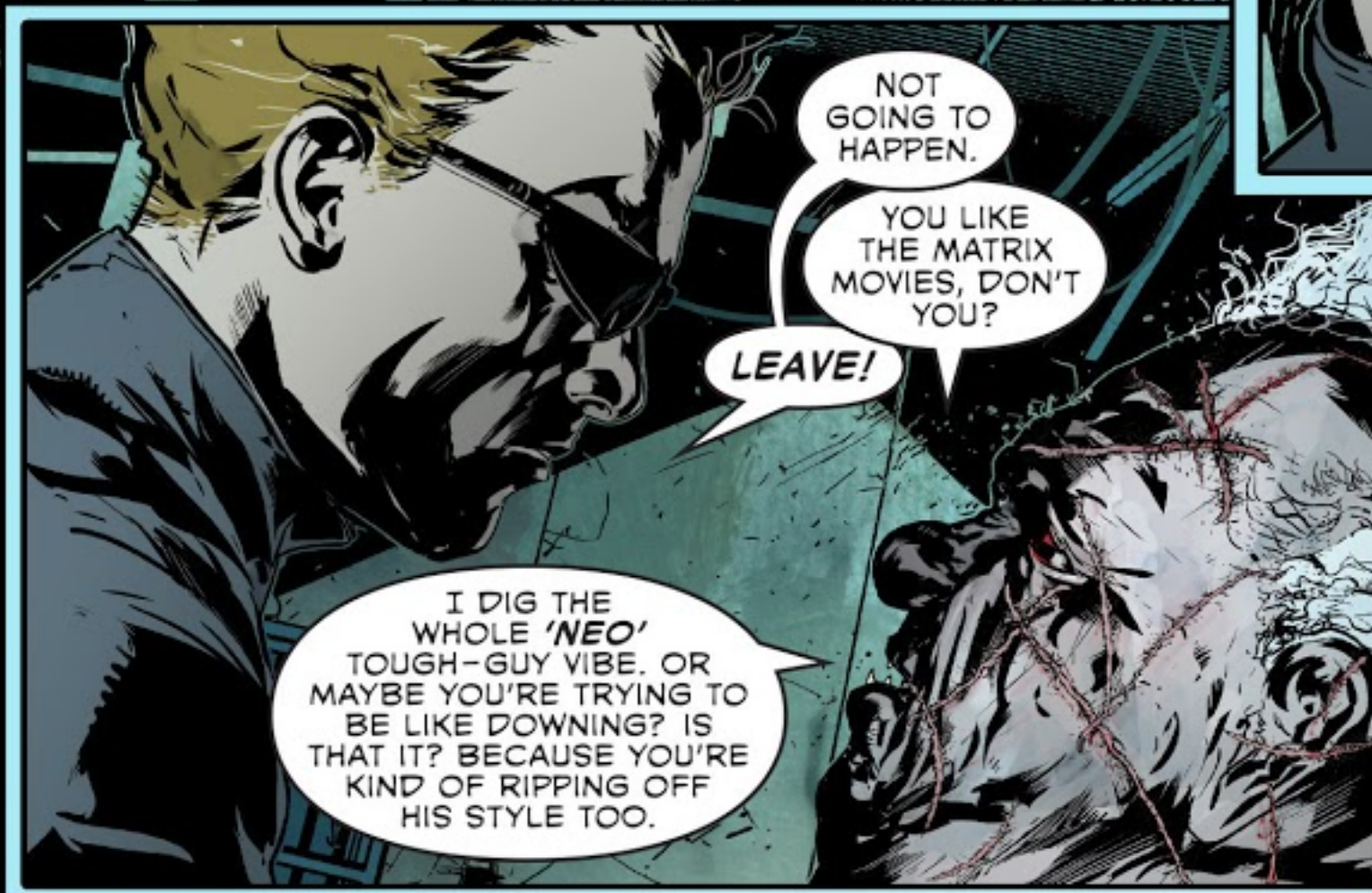
I THINK
SO.



GOOD. I'M
IN THE RIGHT PLACE.
BUT I CAN SEE BY
THAT DIPSHIT LOOK OF
YOURS, AL DIDN'T TELL
YOU, DID HE?

TELL ME
WHAT?

THAT
WHATEVER
YOU BOYS
ARE UP TO--
I GET TO BE
A PART OF
IT TOO.



NOT
GOING TO
HAPPEN.

YOU LIKE
THE MATRIX
MOVIES, DON'T
YOU?

LEAVE!

I DIG THE
WHOLE 'NEO'
TOUGH-GUY VIBE. OR
MAYBE YOU'RE TRYING
TO BE LIKE DOWNING? IS
THAT IT? BECAUSE YOU'RE
KIND OF RIPPING OFF
HIS STYLE TOO.



OKAY...!
THAT'S IT!



I'VE HAD
ENOUGH
OF YOU!

AND
WINGS, TOO!
DEFINITELY A
JIM DOWNING
RIPOFF!
FORGET WHAT
I SAID ABOUT
MATRIX.



I HEARD
YOU CAN'T
MORPH
ANYMORE,
FAT MAN.

UM...



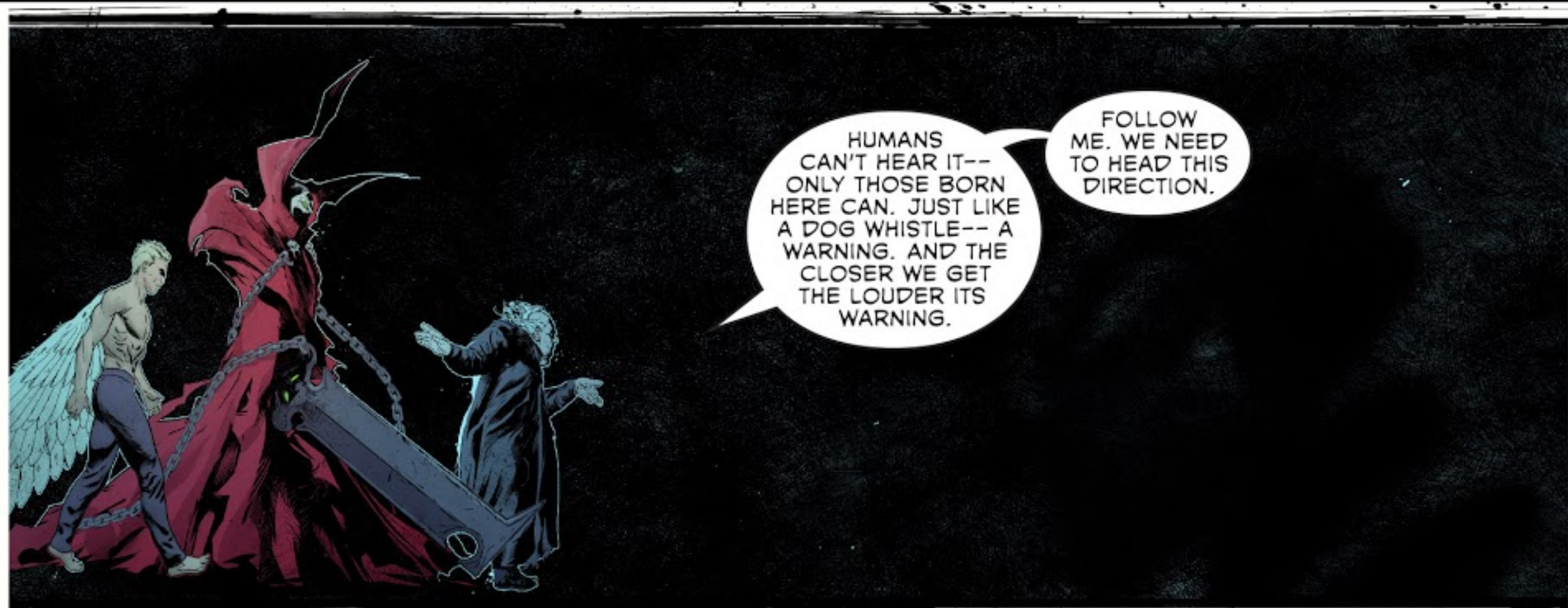
I WOULDN'T
BELIEVE
EVERYTHING
YOU HEAR.



QUIET!
BOTH OF
YOU!











ALL IN GOOD
TIME, DEAR ENEMY. ALL
IN GOOD TIME.

THOSE OF US
WHO'VE DWELLED IN
DARKNESS OUR ENTIRE
EXISTENCE, UNDERSTAND
HOW TO BE PATIENT WHEN
SETTING OUR TRAPS.

BIDING
TIME FOR JUST
THE RIGHT
MOMENT.



I CAN'T
WAIT! AND I
HOPE BEFORE
THIS IS ALL
OVER--YOU TRY
SOMETHING!
SOMETHING
BIG!

BECAUSE
YOUR SIDE ISN'T
THE ONLY ONES WITH
'CHANGELINGS.' AND
NONE OF YOU HAS
BEEN BLESSED
WITH THE 'WRATH
OF GOD!'

SOME
DAY...



Hours later.

IT'S A DEAD-END, SOME KIND OF WALL. SO HOW DO WE GET AROUND THIS, CLOWN?

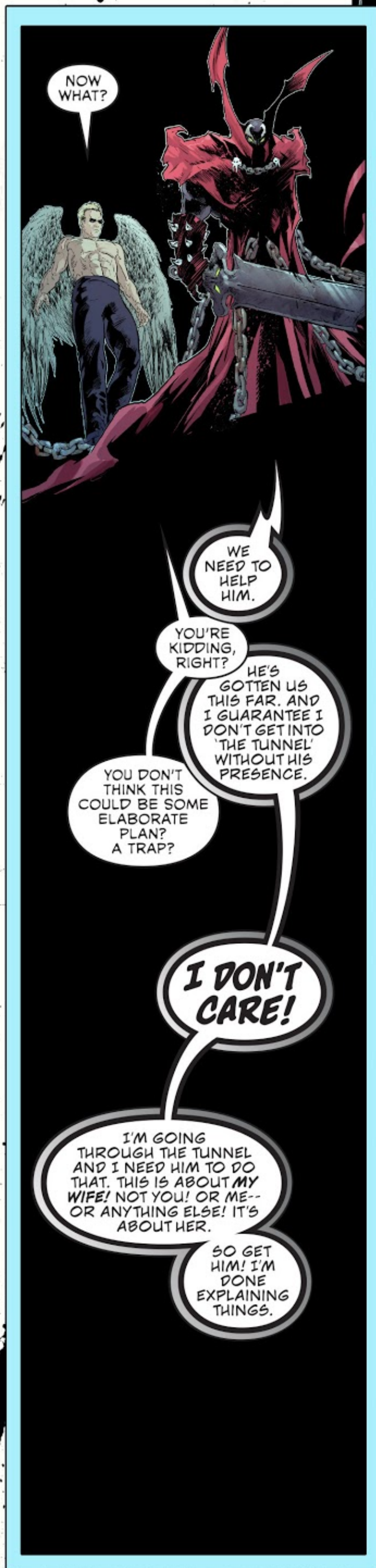
WE DON'T. WE CLIMB IT.

FOR HOW LONG?

UNTIL WE GET TO THE TOP. I'VE NEVER BEEN THIS DEEP BEFORE. WE WERE ALWAYS FORBIDDEN TO. SO THIS IS ALL NEW TO ME TOO. I'M JUST FOLLOWING THE MAP.







NOW WHAT?

WE
NEED TO
HELP
HIM.

YOU'RE
KIDDING,
RIGHT?

HE'S
GOTTEN US
THIS FAR. AND
I GUARANTEE I
DON'T GET INTO
'THE TUNNEL'
WITHOUT HIS
PRESENCE.

YOU DON'T
THINK THIS
COULD BE SOME
ELABORATE
PLAN?
A TRAP?

**I DON'T
CARE!**

I'M GOING
THROUGH THE TUNNEL
AND I NEED HIM TO DO
THAT. THIS IS ABOUT *MY*
WIFE! NOT YOU! OR ME--
OR ANYTHING ELSE! IT'S
ABOUT HER.

SO GET
HIM! I'M
DONE
EXPLAINING
THINGS.



SHIT.



LIKE A HUMAN BULLET
HE FLIES DOWN.
DEEPER. AND DEEPER--
INTO THE SILENT ABYSS.

THEN HE SEES IT -- TWO RED
SPECKS OF LIGHT TUMBLING
IN THE DARK. THEY'RE THE
EYES OF HIS SWORN ENEMY.



GOTCHA!

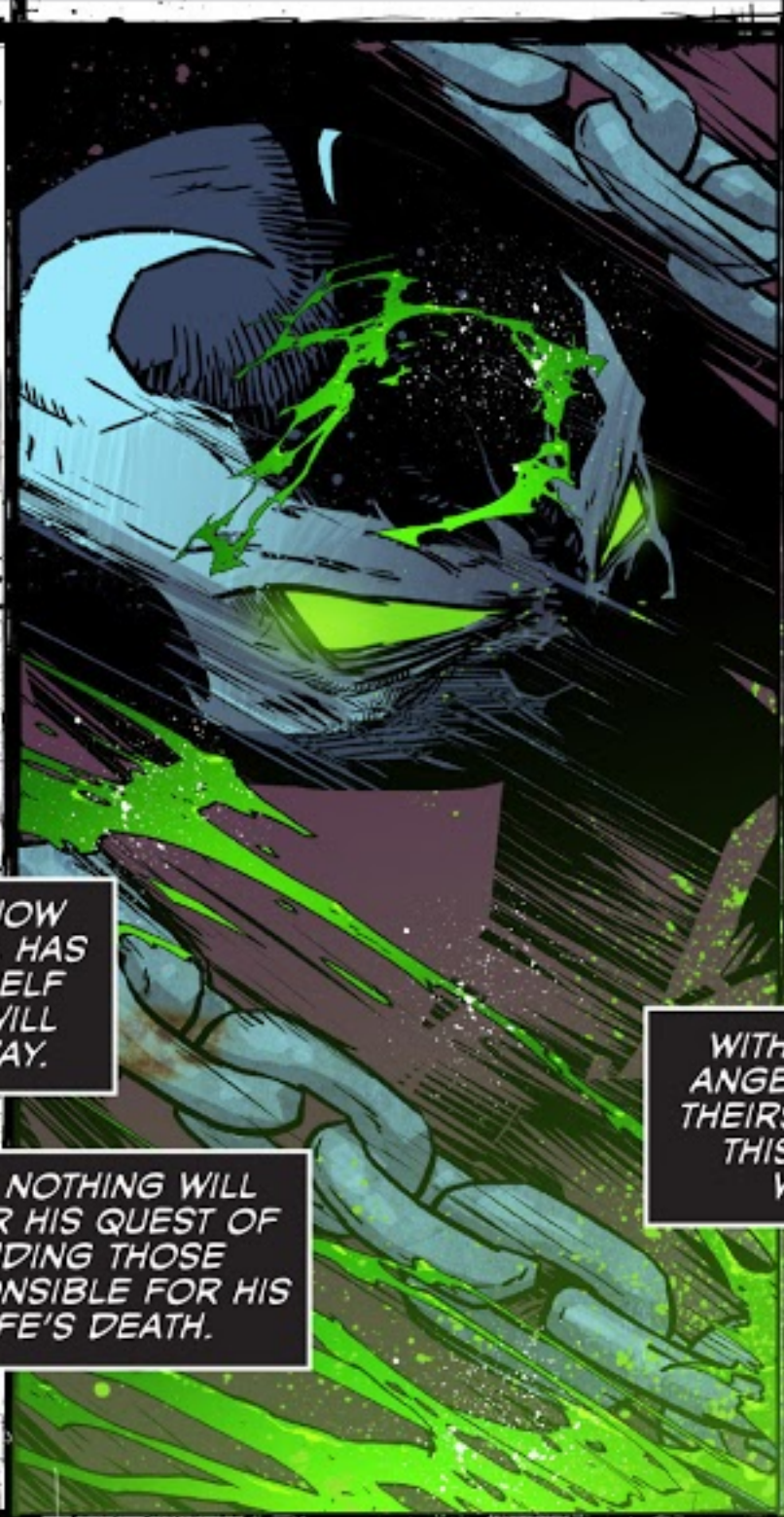


ABOVE, SPAWN HAD
BEGUN TO BUILD A
BRIDGE. USING THE
SWORD GIVEN TO HIM
BY SOMEONE CLAIMING
TO BE GOD. BUT THE
POWER IT WIELDS WAS
MEANT TO BE USED
IN THE PRESENCE
OF LIGHT.

ITS RADIANT GLOW,
THOUGH POWERFUL,
ALSO IS A BEACON
TO THE THOUSANDS
OF DENIZENS
CRAWLING IN THE
BLACK.



BUT THIS MAN, NOW
CLOAKED IN RED, HAS
PROMISED HIMSELF
THAT NOTHING WILL
STAND IN HIS WAY.



THAT NOTHING WILL
IMPAIR HIS QUEST OF
FINDING THOSE
RESPONSIBLE FOR HIS
WIFE'S DEATH.



WITH SAVAGERY AND
ANGER GREATER THAN
THEIRS, THEY ATTACKED
THIS SPAWN AT THE
WRONG TIME.



THERE
IT IS...

THE
GATEWAY.





BOTH OF YOU--YOU'VE DONE YOUR JOB. FIND YOUR WAY BACK AND RETURN TO EARTH.

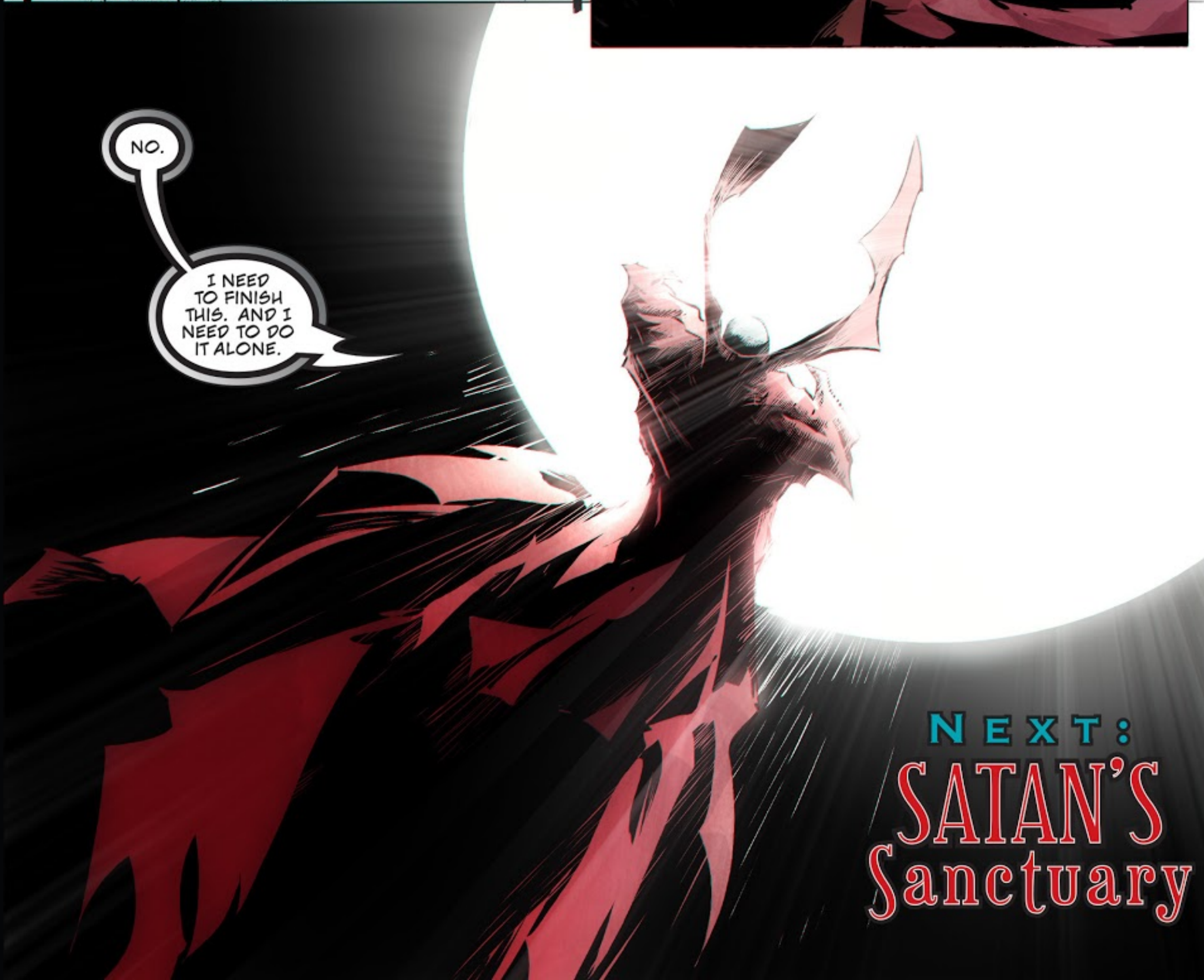
NOT BEFORE YOU DELIVER WHAT YOU SAID. YOU PROMISED TO GIVE ME SOME OF YOUR POWER.



THEN HERE! TAKE IT! IT'S THE LAST FAVOR YOU'LL EVER GET FROM ME!



AL, LET ME COME WITH YOU. I CAN HELP.



NO.

I NEED TO FINISH THIS. AND I NEED TO DO IT ALONE.

NEXT:
SATAN'S
Sanctuary

ERIK LARSEN TODD McFARLANE


image
258
DIGITAL
EDITION

SPAWN[®]



ERIK
LARSEN
TODD
McFARLANE

HE'D GIVEN THEM HIS
WARNING. TOLD THEM
HE WAS COMING...

...AND THAT NOTHING
WOULD STOP HIM.
NOTHING!

NOT NOW. NOT EVER.
BECAUSE WHEN THEY
KILLED HIS WIFE. WHEN
THEY BURNED HER ALIVE
AND STOLE HER SOUL--
THEY SEALED THEIR FATE.
AND THE TIME HAD COME
FOR **SPAWN** TO FINALLY
MAKE THEM PAY.

ALL OF THEM!



THE ONLY
QUESTION LEFT:
DID THEY TAKE
THE BAIT? DID
SATAN HEAR
HIS THREAT?

AND AS HE STARES
LOOKING DOWN AT THE
GRUNTING, SAVAGE
HORDE--ALL PACING
LIKE WILD ANIMALS
THAT ARE STARVING--
HE HAS HIS ANSWER.

THEY TOOK THE BAIT.
AND NOW HE HAS
THEM RIGHT WHERE
HE WANTS THEM!

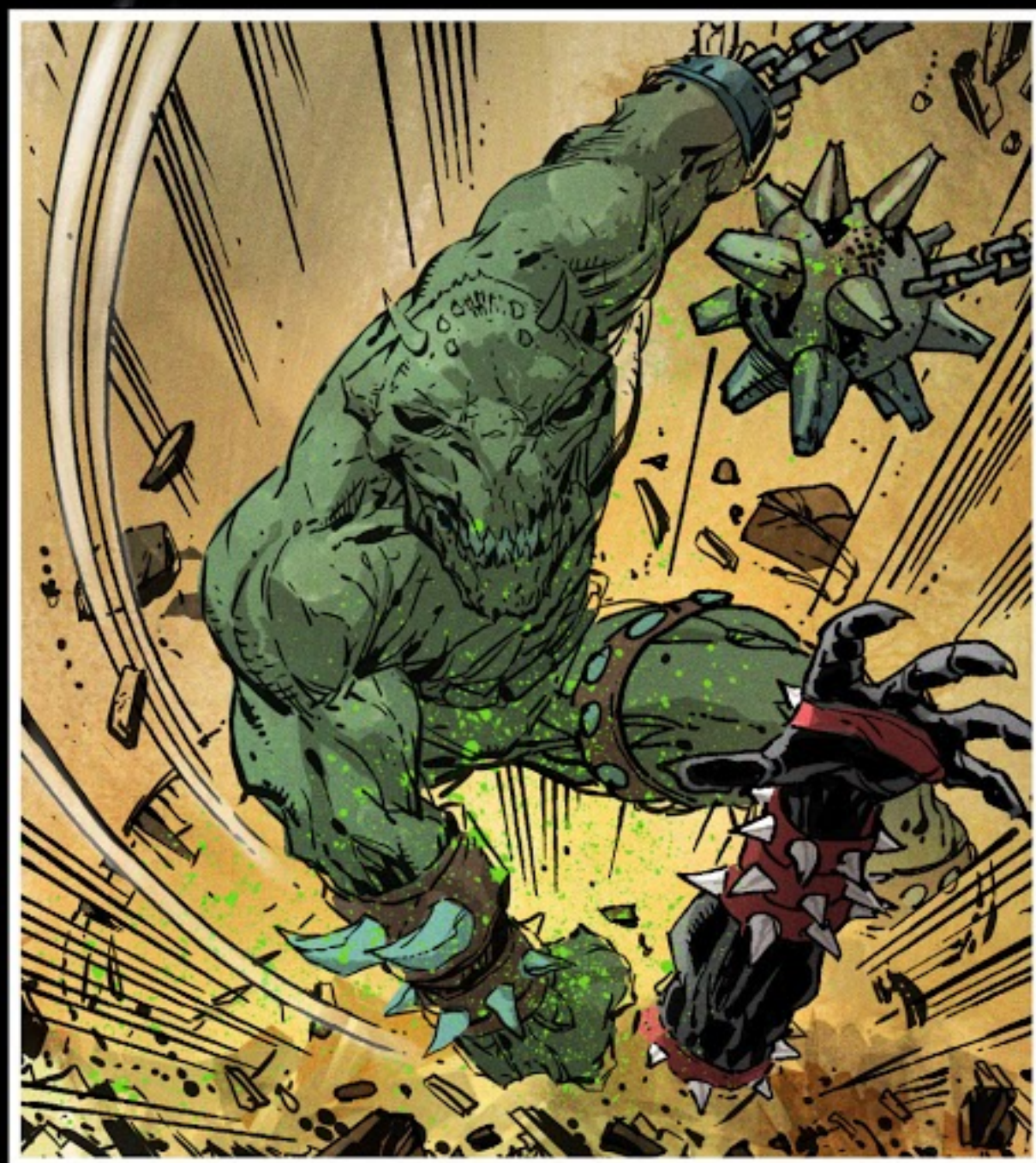
IT'S ALL SO
VERY PERFECT.

BEFORE HE'S
FINISHED, ONE OF
THEM... AND ONLY
ONE OF THEM...
WILL DELIVER HIS
FINAL MESSAGE.

A SINGLE,
SIMPLE
SENTENCE
THAT WILL
MAKE SATAN
SHUDDER
UPON
HEARING IT.









SURVIVORS: 2,143



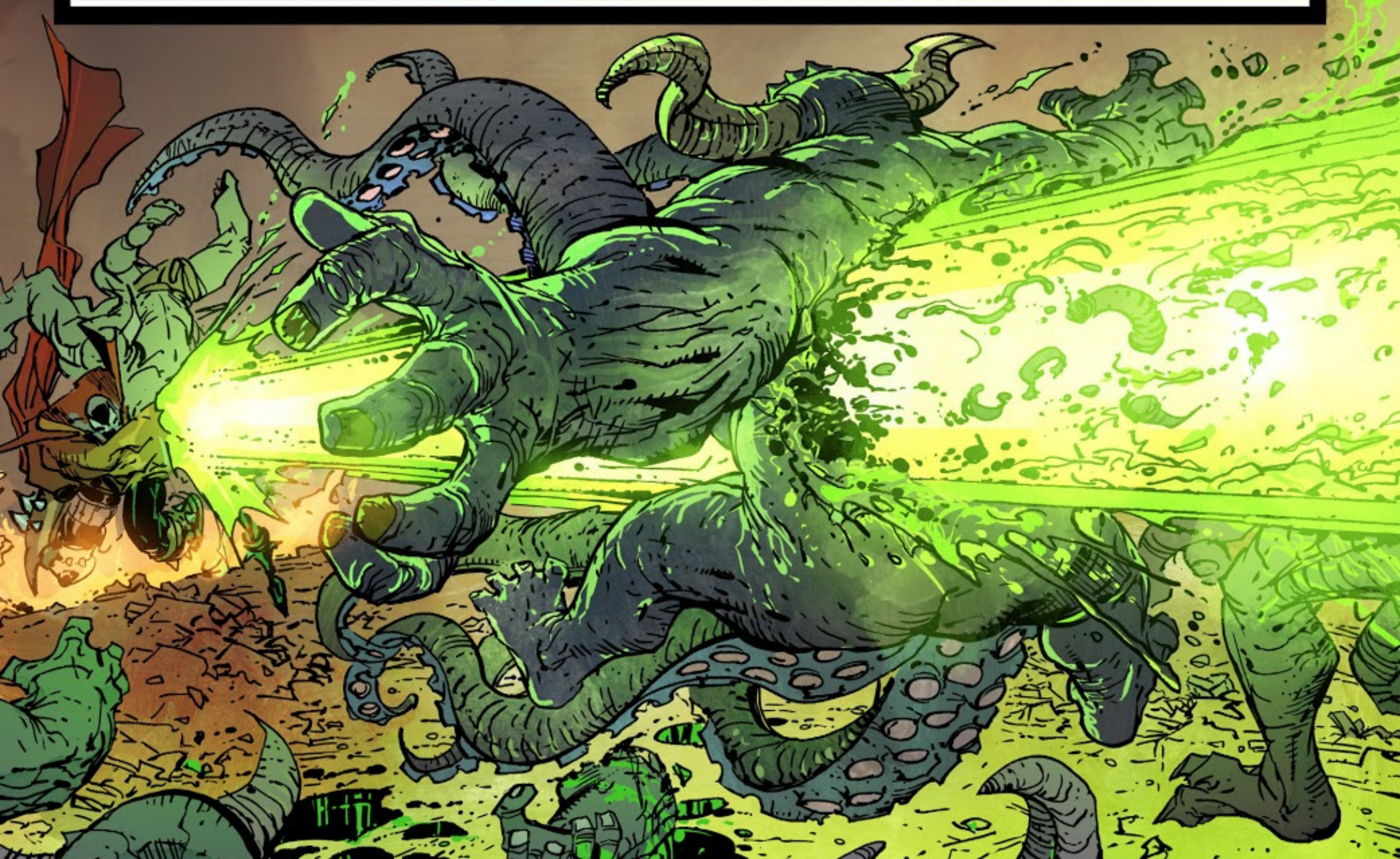


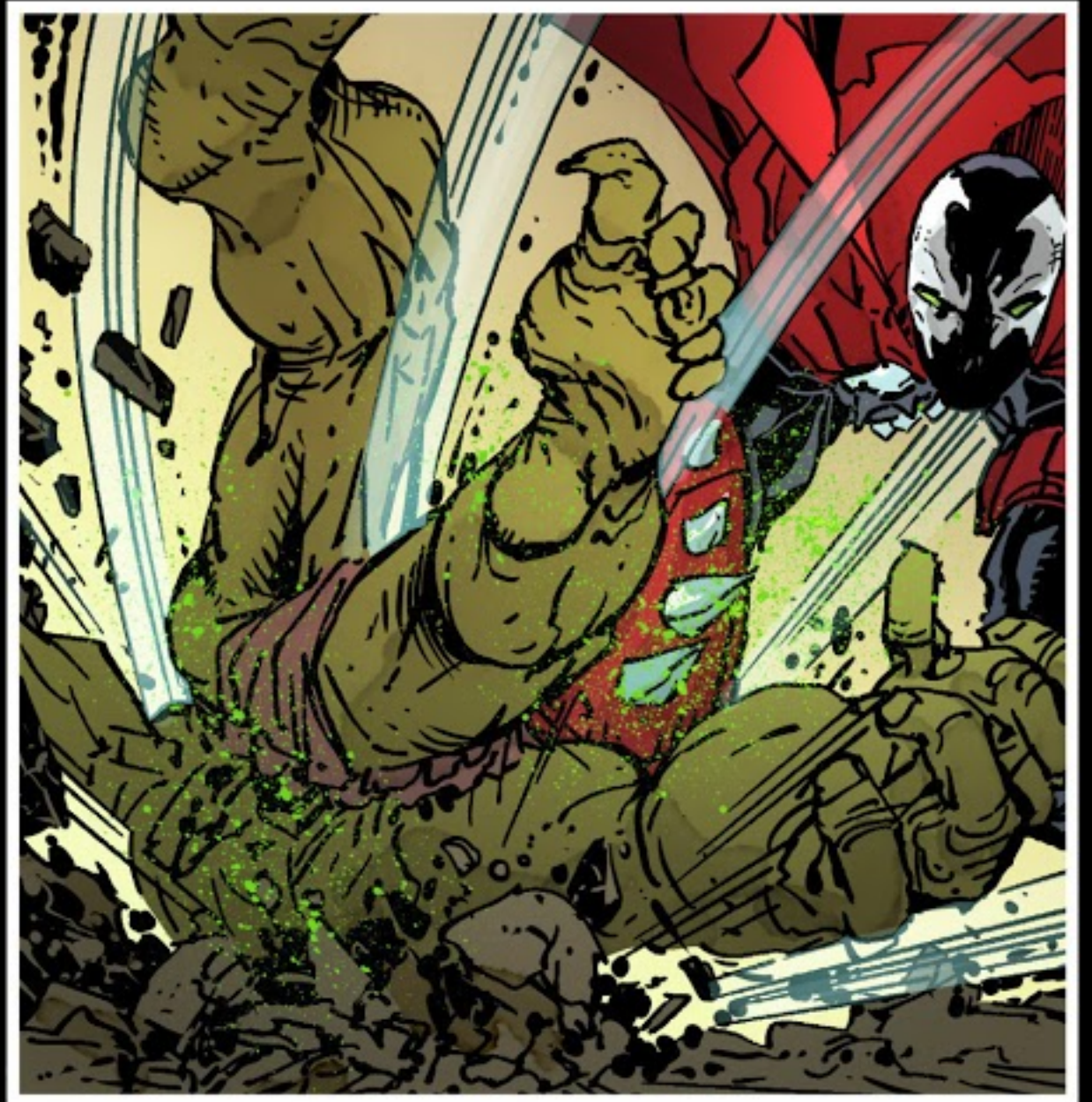


SURVIVORS: 1,572





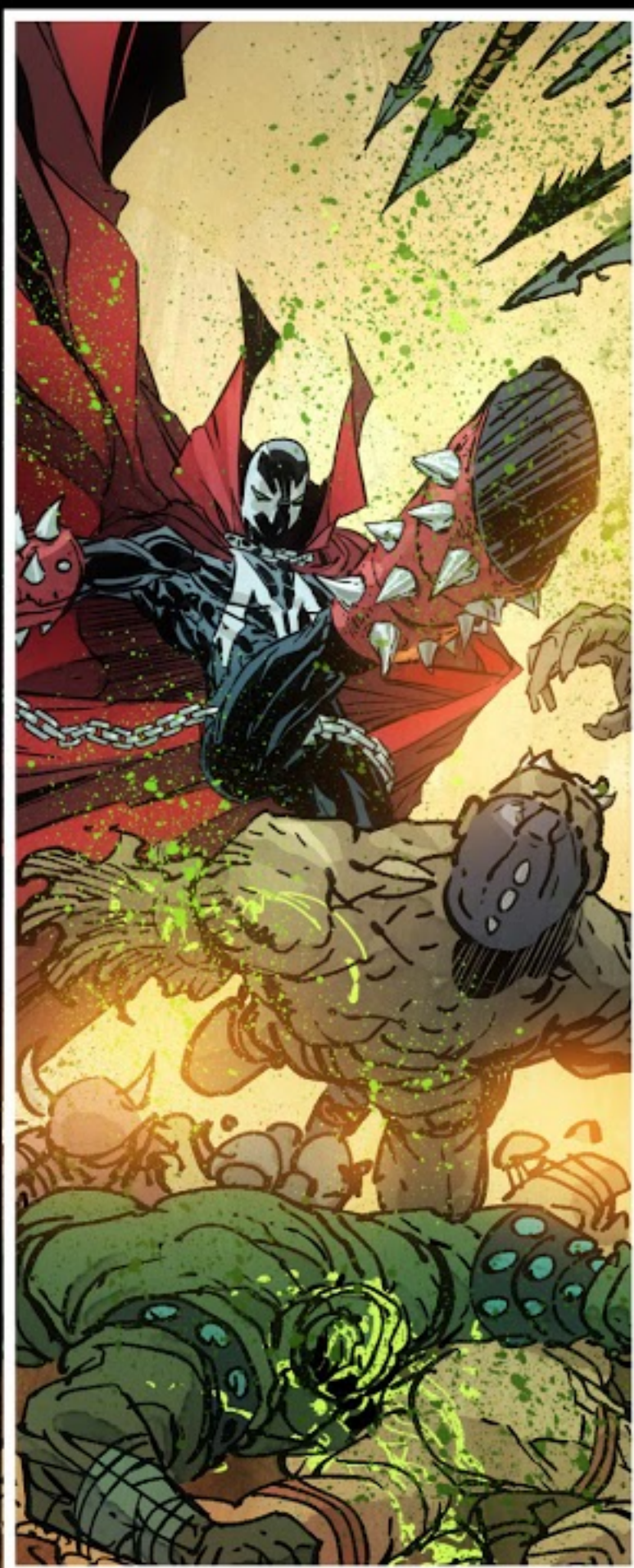










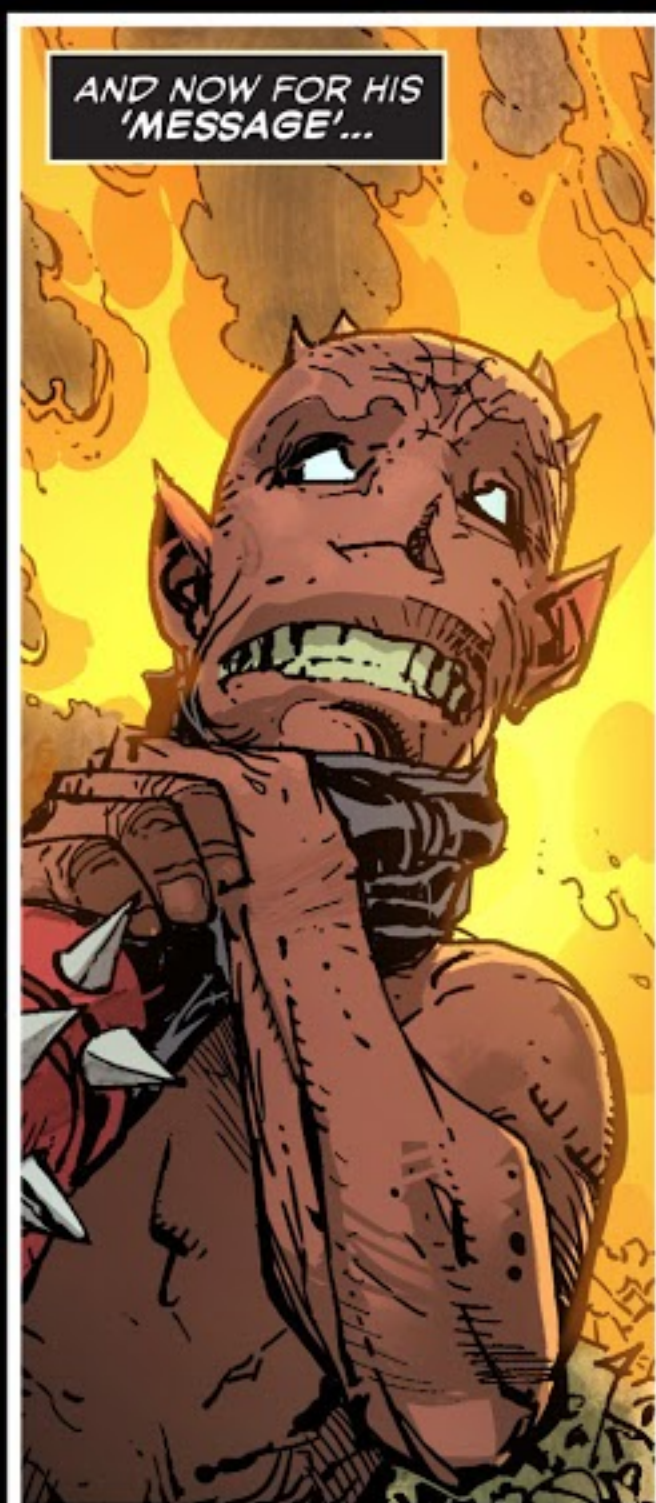




SURVIVORS: 1



AND NOW FOR HIS
'MESSAGE'...



TELL
SATAN
I'M HERE.



NEXT: THE WAR BEGINS!

ERIK LARSEN TODD McFARLANE



SPAWN

PART 1
SATAN
SAGA
WARS





STAND
UP.

YOU DON'T
GET TO REST.

EVER!

NOT IF YOU'RE
GOING TO
RESIST US.



THEY ARE TRYING TO BREAK
HER BECAUSE SHE HAS BEEN
RESISTING AND THEY NEED
HER TO GIVE IN WILLINGLY--
ABSOLUTELY OF HER OWN
FREE WILL.



I SAID
**GET
UP!**



screw...

you!



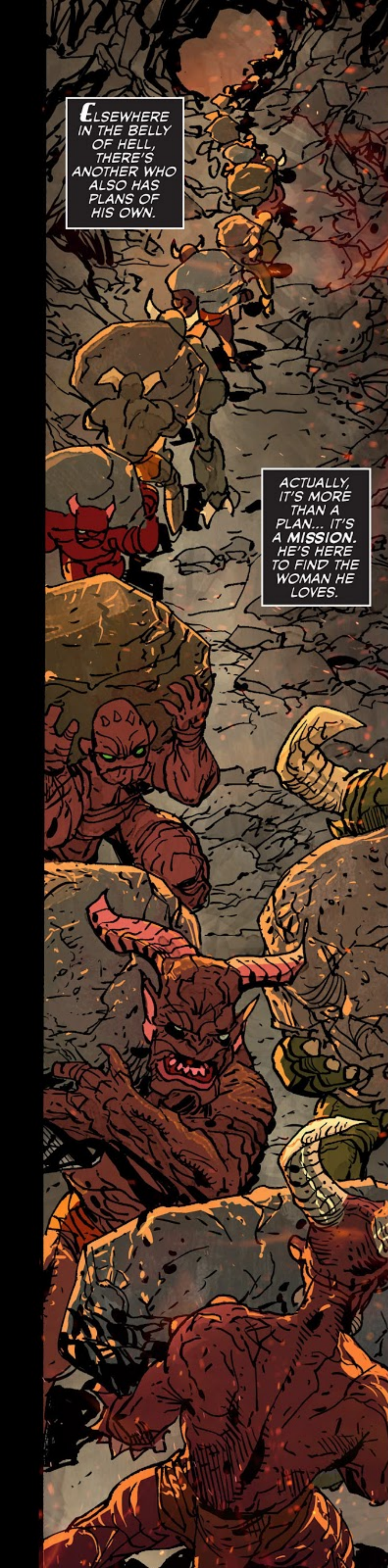
YOU'VE
BECOME
QUITE A
PROBLEM.

OH, SHE'S MUCH
MORE THAN THAT.



YOU'LL
PAY FOR
THAT...





ELSEWHERE
IN THE BELLY
OF HELL,
THERE'S
ANOTHER WHO
ALSO HAS
PLANS OF
HIS OWN.

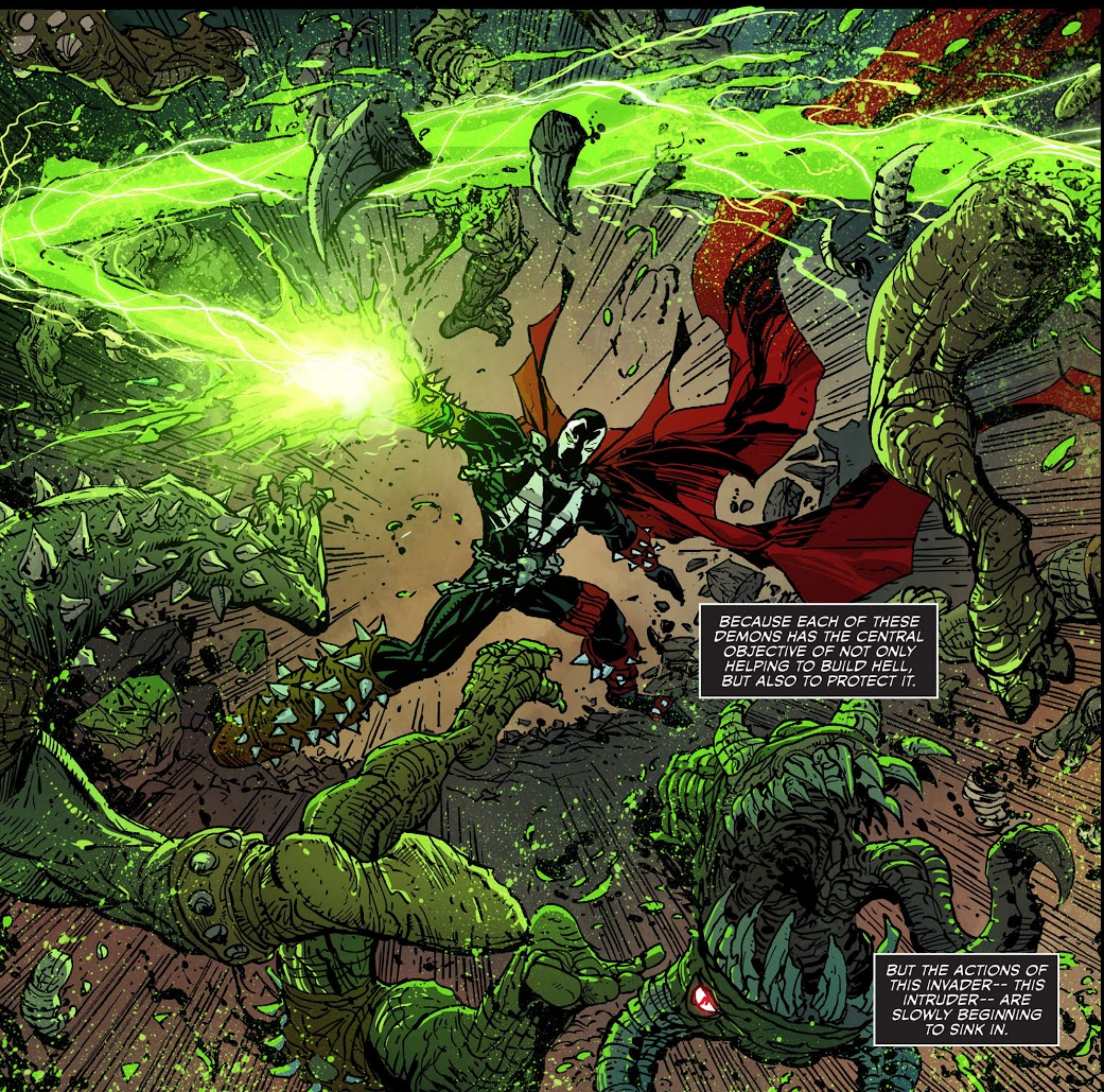
ACTUALLY,
IT'S MORE
THAN A
PLAN... IT'S
A MISSION.
HE'S HERE
TO FIND THE
WOMAN HE
LOVES.



AND END HIS PERSONAL
WAR ONCE AND FOR ALL.



TO DESTROY HIS ENEMIES...





I'M GOING
THROUGH THIS
VALLEY--TO FIND
YOUR MASTER!
EITHER YOU LET
ME PASS...

OR I KILL
EVERY
ONE OF
YOU.

THEN, LIKE A
HELLISH MOSES, THE
SEA OF DEMONS PART
IN FRONT OF HIM.

WHY?
BECAUSE THEY
KNOW THAT THOUGH
HE'LL VENTURE
UNHINDERED FOR
A WHILE, THERE'S
ALWAYS ANOTHER
BARRIER WAITING
FOR THOSE WHO
AREN'T COMPLETELY
SUBJUGATED TO
THEIR LORD'S
POWER.



THEY ALSO
KNOW THAT
THOSE BARRIERS
ARE NOT ONLY
DEADLY, BUT
IMPOSING IN
THEIR SIZE AND
SCALE!



AND FOR ANY
OTHER BEING,
THAT WOULD BE
ENOUGH OF A
DETERRENCE--
BUT NOT FOR THIS
MAN. NOT THIS
'HELLSPAWN.'



HE'S
COME
TOO FAR.



SUFFERED
TOO LONG.



NOW HE INTENDS TO MAKE ANYTHING THAT GETS IN HIS WAY SUFFER LIKE HE HAS. AND HE'S COME TO PEACE WITH THE KNOWLEDGE THAT HE MAY NOT LIVE TO SEE THE END OF HIS QUEST.

HE'S FINE WITH THAT.

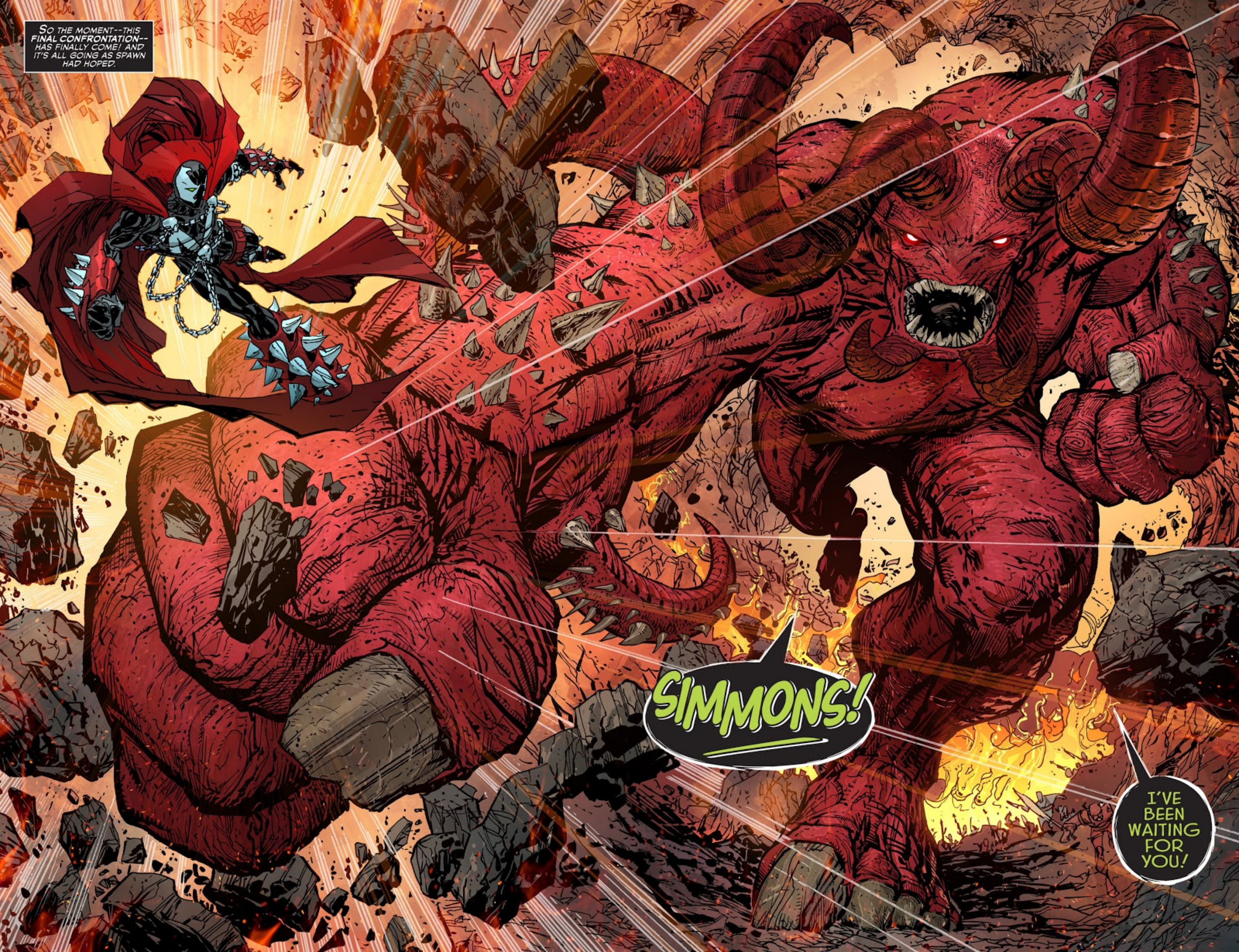


BECAUSE THE ONE THING THEY HAVE UNDERESTIMATED--THE THING THEY'VE ALL MISUNDERSTOOD--IS THAT THE SYMBIOTE HE WEARS MAY VERY WELL BE THE MOST POWERFUL THING HELL HAS EVER CREATED.



AND AS THE GROUND BELOW STARTS TO SHUDDER, AL KNOWS SATAN IS AWARE OF THAT FACT TOO.

SO THE MOMENT--THIS
FINAL CONFRONTATION--
HAS FINALLY COME! AND
IT'S ALL GOING AS SPAWN
HAD HOPED.



SIMMONS!

I'VE
BEEN
WAITING
FOR
YOU!





I DON'T
GIVE A SHIT
ABOUT ANY
OF THAT.

**BRING
ME MY WIFE!!**
THEN I'LL STOP! UNTIL
THEN, DON'T YOU EVER
TELL ME WHAT TO
DO AGAIN!



YOU
DON'T HAVE
THE POWER TO
GO AGAINST
ME.



THEN
**KILL
ME!**

RIGHT
NOW!
DO IT!
I'M READY
TO DIE!



*BUT AS
UNBELIEVABLE
AS IT MAY
SEEM... SATAN
HESITATES.*

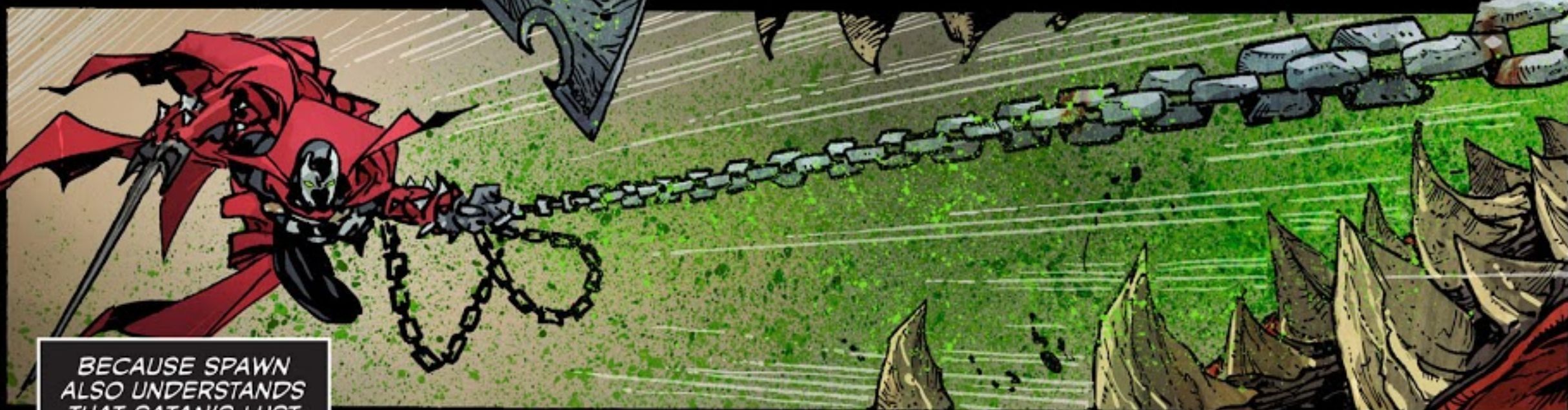


SPAWN KNEW HE WOULD... BECAUSE HELL'S LORD COVETS THE COSTUME AL SIMMONS NOW WEARS. IF SATAN DOES ANY SERIOUS DAMAGE TO AL--THE SYMBIOTE MAY BE INJURED TOO.



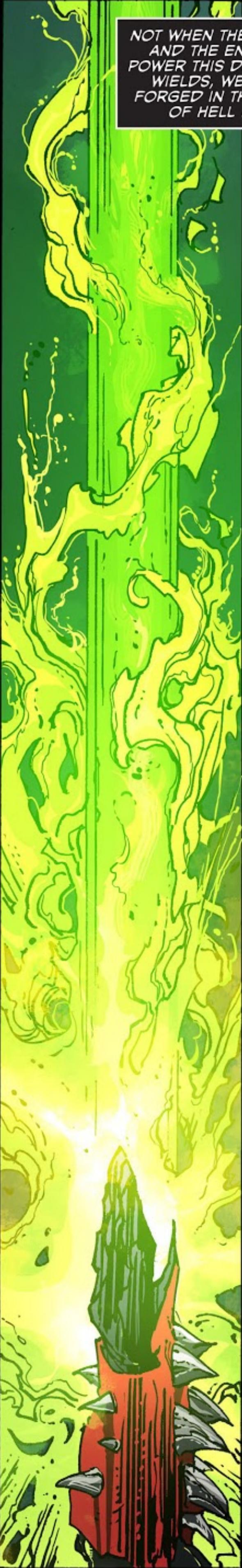
THAT UNKNOWN IS THE ONLY ADVANTAGE AL HAS GOING FOR HIM.

HE MEANS TO EXPLOIT THAT-- AS FAST AS POSSIBLE--TO FIND WHERE THEY'VE TAKEN HIS WIFE.



BECAUSE SPAWN ALSO UNDERSTANDS THAT SATAN'S LUST FOR HIS COSTUME, DOESN'T MEAN THE GIANT LORD WILL JUST LET THIS SPAWN HAVE HIS WAY.





NOT WHEN THE COSTUME
AND THE ENORMOUS
POWER THIS DEAD HUMAN
WIELDS, WERE BOTH
FORGED IN THE BOWELS
OF HELL ITSELF.



SATAN CONTROLS THOSE
FORCES... AND WILL
RECLAIM THOSE WHICH
WERE HIS CREATIONS
TO START WITH.



AND WHEN
HE GETS WHAT
HE WANTS
FROM THIS
TREACHEROUS
SPAWN...

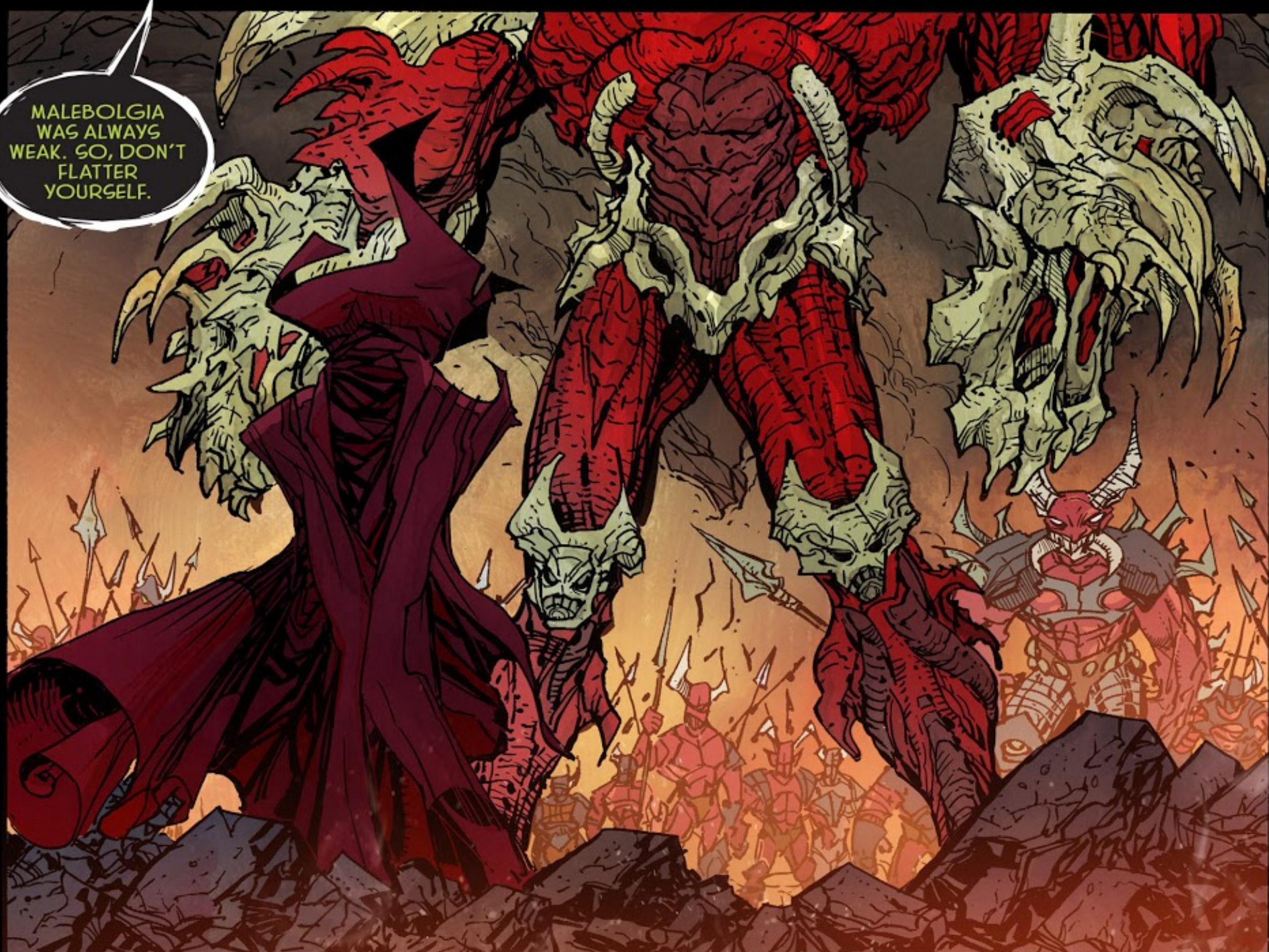
...HE'LL EXACT
AS PAINFUL A
PUNISHMENT UPON
HIM AS HE CAN.

GO AHEAD.
GROW BIGGER!
IS THAT WHAT YOU
THINK IT TAKES TO
STOP ME? BEING
EIGHT-HUNDRED
FEET TALL?

I THREATEN
YOU THAT MUCH?
WHY? DID SOMEONE
TELL YOU WHAT I DID
TO MALEBOLGIA? *
WHAT I'M CAPABLE
OF DOING TO
YOU?

* Issue 100 -- Todd

OR ARE
YOU AFRAID
YOUR OWN
CREATIONS ARE
NOW YOUR
SUPERIOR?





AL...?

PLEASE...
IS THAT
REALLY
YOU?

IT'S HIM.
THE QUESTION
IS-- DOES HE
BELIEVE *YOU'RE*
THE REAL
THING?

OR IS
THIS ANOTHER
TRICK WE'RE
PLAYING? WHAT
DO YOU THINK,
SIMMONS?

AL WANTS TO BELIEVE IT'S
WANDA. OR, AT LEAST, HER
SOUL. BUT HE'S BEEN
LIED TO AND DECEIVED
SO MANY TIMES BEFORE...
HE NEEDS TO BE SURE IT
TRULY IS HER.

WANDA...



